THE LIBRARY OF THE
UNIVERSITY OF
NORTH CAROLINA
AT CHAPEL HILL

THE COLLECTION OF
NORTH CAROLINIANA
ENDOWED BY
JOHN SPRUNT HILL
CLASS OF 1889

C286.7
A24
1987-88

UNIVERSITY OF N.C. AT CHAPEL HILL
00037528283

FOR USE ONLY IN
THE NORTH CAROLINA COLLECTION

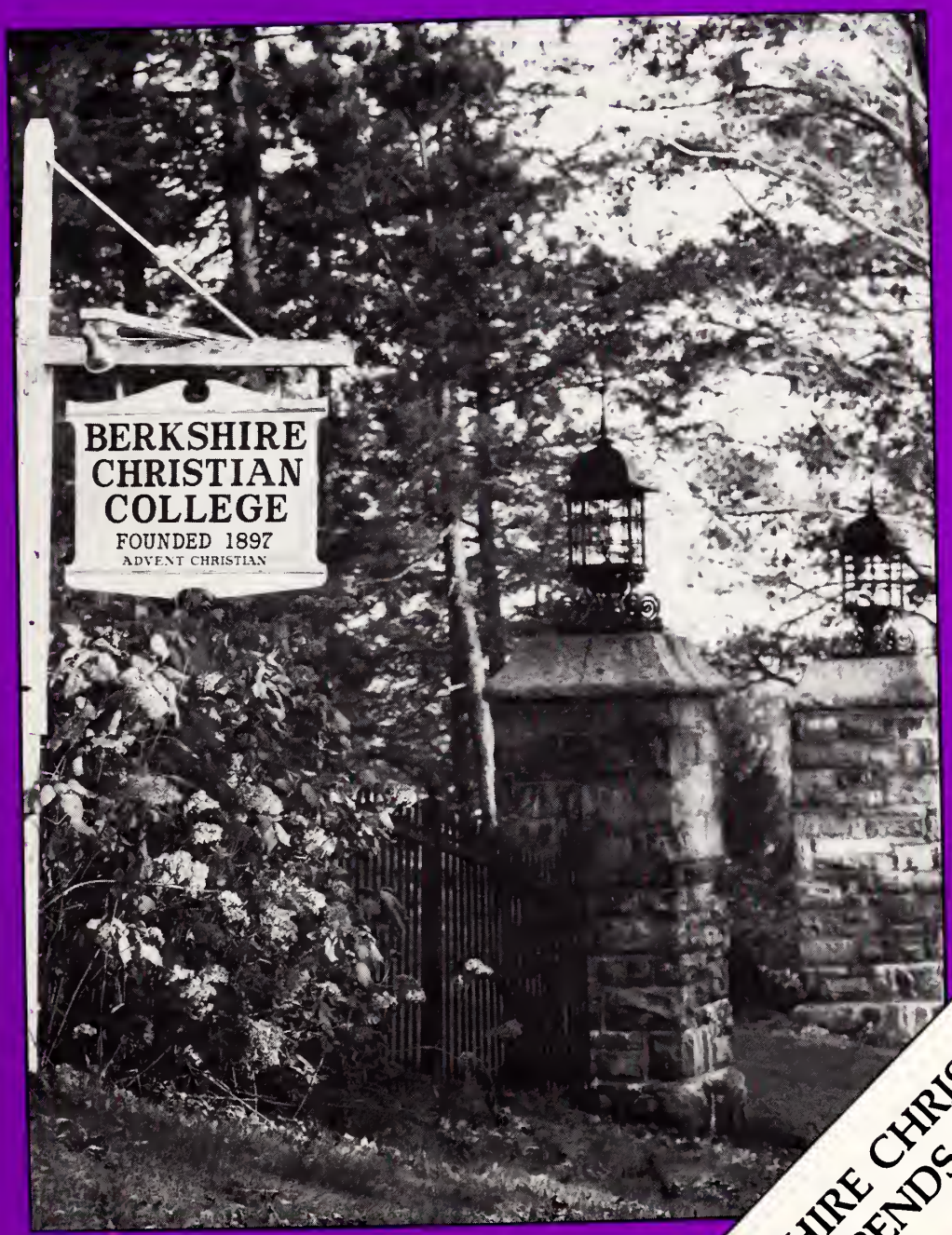
Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2013

http://archive.org/details/adventchristianw411adve

C286.7/A24

Advent Christian WITNESS

January 1987



BERKSHIRE CHRISTIAN COLLEGE SUSPENDS OPERATIONS

page four

Member
epa
Evangelical Press Association

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
Robert J. Mayer

MISSIONS
Harold Patterson

WHFMS
Caroline M. Michael

GRAPHIC ARTS
Linda Perault

TYPESETTING
Susan Gettis

EFMA
MEMBER MISSION

EVANGELICAL COUNCIL FOR FINANCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY
ECFA
MEMBER
The symbol of trust

Advent Christian Witness (ISSN 0741-4307) is published monthly except for a combined July-August issue, 11 times a year, by the Advent Christian General Conference of America, 14601 Albemarle Road, P.O. Box 23152, Charlotte, NC 28212. Postmaster: Send address changes to *Advent Christian Witness*, P.O. Box 23152, Charlotte, NC.

Policy: As the official publication of the Advent Christian General Conference of America, the *Advent Christian Witness* publishes the teachings of the Advent Christian Church and promotes the task of evangelism both in North America and throughout the world.

Rates in the U.S. and Canada: one year, $11.00. Single Copy, $1.00. Overseas one year, $14.00.

All articles and materials are copyright ©1986 by the Advent Christian General Conference unless otherwise indicated. Permission to reprint available upon request. The views expressed in this magazine are those of the author and may not necessarily reflect those of the editor or the Advent Christian General Conference.

from the editor

BCC: A Rich Heritage Demands New Vision

By now, most of you know that Berkshire Christian College suspended operations on December 31. Faced with a mounting deficit and declining enrollment, the college's Board of Regents voted to suspend operations, sell the Lenox campus, and look for new ways to accomplish BCC's mission of providing pastors, missionaries, and leaders for the Advent Christian Church.

Advent Christians have greeted this announcement with shock, sorrow, and concern for our future. The breakup of BCC's dedicated faculty and staff means a severe loss to the denomination. Berkshire Christian College has trained countless Advent Christian women and men throughout its rich 95 year history. Those graduates have brought Christian character and sacrificial service to our Church.

Naturally, the events at Berkshire Christian College will give rise to much discussion and many questions. But as we discuss issues surrounding BCC and the future training of Advent Christian leaders, let's do two things.

First, let's resist the temptation to blame individuals or groups for what's happened. Every organization and business has a variety of issues on which well meaning people disagree. When an organization experiences difficult times, the side issues can obscure the real concerns.

In BCC's case, the real concern is this: Over the last ten to fifteen years there has been a sharp decline in Advent Christian students attending the college. That decline is chiefly responsible for the college's inability to continue operations. All the speculation and argument over other issues won't change this reality.

Second, realize that if Advent Christians are going to do an effective job of educating pastors, missionaries, and church planters, we must pull together! We're a diverse group with a tendency to want to do things within our conferences or regions. That won't work in educating our church leadership. New ways of training Advent Christian leaders must be supported by all of us. To do less means our congregations will face an increasingly anti-Christian society without strong biblically trained Advent Christian pastors and leaders.

The events at Berkshire Christian College represent a loss for all of us. But as we grieve over that loss, we must remember that God is sovereign and that He has a purpose for our lives, our congregations, and our denomination. Pray for the faculty, staff, students, administration, and regents of the college during this difficult time of transition. Pray for those charged with the task of developing new ways for training of Advent Christian pastors and leaders. And pray that God will continue to call Advent Christian men and women to serve His church. □

C 286.7
A24
1987-88

Volume 35 Number 1

Advent Christian
WITNESS

January 1987

FEATURES

Berkshire Christian College Suspends Operations Lloyd Richardson 4
The college president's address to the college community announcing suspension of operations. The address is followed by three pages of photos depicting life at the Lenox campus over the past several years.

Japan Journeys Steven and Ann Lay 10
Short-term missionaries share their impressions of life and work in Japan.

It's Time Clayton Blackstone 12
Pastor Blackstone shares about building a vision for the future in the first of a series of expositions of the book of Ezra.

Wanted: Moses Clones Robert Dingman 16
Finding the right leadership for Christian organizations is a difficult task. The author challenges us to look for the best.

ON THE COVER

The entrance to Berkshire Christian College's Lenox campus. Advent Christians everywhere are saddened by the decision to suspend operations and are prayerfully concerned for the college's future.

DEPARTMENTS

Editorial 2

Women's Ministries 18

Prayer Partnership 21

Mission Directory 22

7114

Berkshire Christian College Suspends Operations

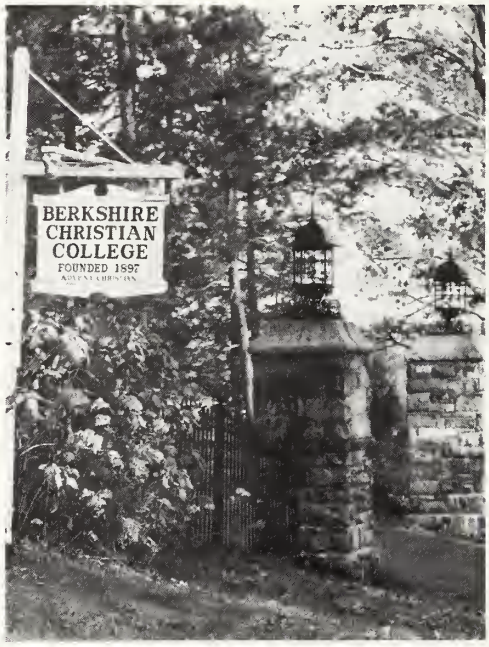
Lloyd Richardson

This morning as I was reading in the book of James as part of my personal devotions, I came upon this passage. It seemed particularly appropriate to me with respect to the information I must share with you today. I'd like to read for you verses 2 through 8 from James, Chapter One:

"Dear brothers, is your life full of difficulties and temptations? Then be happy, for when the way is rough, your patience has a chance to grow. So let it grow, and don't try to squirm out of your problems. For when your patience is finally in full bloom, then you will be ready for anything, strong in character, full and complete."

"If you want to know what God wants you to do, ask him, and he will gladly tell you, for he is always ready to give a bountiful supply of wisdom to all who asks him; he will not resent it. But when you ask him, *be sure that you really expect him to tell you,* for a doubtful mind will be as unsettled as a wave of the sea that is driven and tossed by the wind; and every decision you then make will be uncertain, as you turn first this way, and then that. *If you don't ask with faith, don't expect the Lord to give you any solid answer.*"

As everyone in this room is well aware, the Board of Regents



met in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina to determine the future of the Berkshire Christian College. Many of you have been in prayer and fasting to ask that a special measure of wisdom and judgment, which can only come from the Lord, might be imparted to these men and women as they wrestled with such a momentous decision.

Your minds and thoughts were joined with hundreds of others from across the country in approaching the throne of grace asking for guidance and wisdom. Scores of written expressions to that effect have come in from across the country. And the Regents themselves paused at one point in their deliberations to again ask the Father to be with them by His spirit.

As the passage I read says, "when you ask Him (for wisdom), be sure that you really expect Him to tell you." To tell you His answer — not yours, not the one *you want* to hear. And the Lord spoke to the Regents at their session — and they heard.

To prepare men and women for Gospel work

I must digress briefly to put their decision into context again for you. It is not my purpose to give you a synopsis of the history of Berkshire Christian College, as interesting as that is. It is my intent only to repeat that the charter of the college as incorporated in 1902 grants authority to "prepare men and women for gospel work." And over the years it has done that eminently well, training many to go out into the harvest fields of this world — from Roxbury, Massachusetts, to India, Japan, and the Philippines.

Since coming to the Berkshires it has expanded the concept of "gospel work" and added programs in nursing, social work, business, and education. It is the past decade I wish to focus in on for a moment, particularly the financial structure of the institution.

Every era in American higher educaton has had its own challenges, often quite different in nature, from Civil Rights sit-

ins to Vietnam War protests. The last ten years has most dramatically been characterized by retrenchment. As the number of students attending college has declined, as public policy and societal patterns have changed, and the costs of providing education outstripped inflation, colleges and universities across the country have had to adjust as best they could — through introduction of new programs, particularly for adult learners, reductions in faculty and staff, major fund-raising efforts, and expanded marketing activities. Many of these adjustments have not been applicable for Berkshire, given its specialized curriculum and its location.

Those of you in the Business Curriculum who have studied a bit about Micro-economics know that the internal interrelationships of the various elements which make up the financial structure of an organization or institution must be in equilibrium. For at least the past ten years the basic economic structure of Berkshire Christian College has been out of balance, and hence it has not enjoyed financial stability or viability. Nor can that ever be achieved unless the economic structure is brought into balance.

Two and one-half years ago the Board of Regents asked me to be your President. They admitted that there was no vision for the college, and that the recent past had entailed a series of reoccurring financial crises. It was clear what was at fault — and what had to be done.

The first effort (Year One) to correct the problem was to design and begin to implement a far-reaching Strategic Plan. The goal was to realize a quantum leap in enrollment — through creating a more exciting and relevant educational experience; and through marketing this more attractive product to a larger pool of prospective students than the existing constituency base allowed. While the curriculum revision *has* gone well, the marketing was not successful.

The next effort (Year Two) was to attempt to realize a major infusion of capital through a national fund-raising and promotional program. Again, while considerable gains were made, the goal of a quantum leap in available working capital was not realized.

Three directives

Last January the Board of Regents, meeting in Boston, were informed that the college could not continue beyond June given the conditions under which it was then operating. The directive from the board on that occasion was to 1) consolidate the curriculum; 2) proceed with the development of college owned property to the west; and 3) develop a legitimate balanced budget from ordinary revenues, i.e. tuition and gift income. These things were initiated with the intent that they be accomplished by June 30.

The operating budget was thrown out of balance with an unanticipated drop in enrollment this fall, and you have all heard at least part of the story of delays in approvals by local city officials and town board, and the discovery that the septic systems had failed, requiring costly repairs. As we meet this morning, there is *still* one item related to zoning which must be resolved before we can proceed. While the interpretation and precedence of law is clearly on our side, the delay in the resolution has become the straw which has broken the camel's back.

Therefore, the financial structure of the college remains fundamentally out of balance, and without this infusion of new capital as expected, the long-term picture is tenuous and the short-term is impossible.

The assets of Berkshire Christian College far exceed its liabilities. The problem is twofold. 1) The continuing consumption of these assets by borrowing against the future until they will be gone and *not* be adequate to cover liabilities; and 2) Timing. We have just run out of time. It is no longer possible to keep the wolf from the door!

Specifically, while resources remain just out of reach, *today* the college finds itself with no money, having not paid its faculty or staff last Friday, with another payroll coming due in less than two weeks, with over $82,000 in unpaid bills which are due, and with nearly a quarter of a million dollars of short-term notes which have been advanced in recent months, all coming due before December 31, 1986.

In summary, without the consummation of the real estate transactions upon which we have been counting, the college faces obligations between now and the end of December 1986 nearly

Continued on next page

$400,000 more than it has available of is likely to receive.

The decision to suspend operations

Your Regents had no choice but to make the decision which was reached. It is not good stewardship of the resources God has provided for the purpose of "preparing men and women for Gospel work" by continuing to squander them in an uneconomical situation.

Acting responsibly, with a concern for Christian Ethics, and believing it is in the will of the Lord, the Board of Regents has directed the administration of the college to take the following actions:

1. To suspend the operation of the Lenox campus and the provision of educational services as of December 31, 1986.
2. To make provision for the members of the graduating class of 1986 to complete their degree programs.
3. To secure offers for the sale of property currently owned by the college.
4. To provide all reasonable assistance to non-graduating students who desire to transfer to another institution at mid-year.
5. To honor the contracts of faculty and staff through June 30, 1987, and to provide a severance arrangement for those who desire to seek other employment before that time.

Further, the Board of Regents appointed a special Task Force to recommend a financially viable alternative to preserve the historic mission and purpose of Berkshire Christian College, "the training of men and women for Gospel work."

This is difficult news to bring and difficult news to hear. If you will return with me in your mind to the Scripture passage once more — "But when you ask Him, make sure that you really expect Him to tell you." Many have asked, and the Lord has told the Regents. From the resources which result from the liquidation of this asset God has provided can rise up an even greater, more effective ministry in His name. We do not know at this time what He has in store.

Appreciation of faculty, staff, and students

"On the occasion of the suspension of operations of Berkshire Christian College at its Lenox site, the Board of Regents wishes to honor those who have served so faithfully in Christ's ministry on the faculty, administration, and staff over many years. There have been many great men and women from its founders to those currently serving. Many have spent the significant part of their professional lives at the college. Their service has *not been* in vain."

"The effective ministries of those trained at the school testify to the quality of teaching. The stability of the college community throughout the many stresses in her history testify to the quality of Christian character and maturity of all of her employees."

"The Board wishes to thank all the college employees. We honor you for your vision, commitment, and service. We appreciate your help. We will be in prayer for you."

"On the sad occasion of the suspension of operations, due to declining enrollment over an extended period causing a growing financial crisis of unmanageable proportions, the Board of Regents of the college wish to extend their regrets to the students of the college. We are deeply sorry that we will not be able to provide the educational program for which we had such high hopes and which you had chosen."

"We have asked the administration of the college to provide all necessary services to facilitate your transfer to another institution and to provide other support services during this difficult transition period. Further, we are expecting to make special arrangments for those who would be graduating this year."

"We are very appreciative of your prayerful support and concern. We wish you all well. We trust that God will bless you in your education and the ministries to which He calls you."

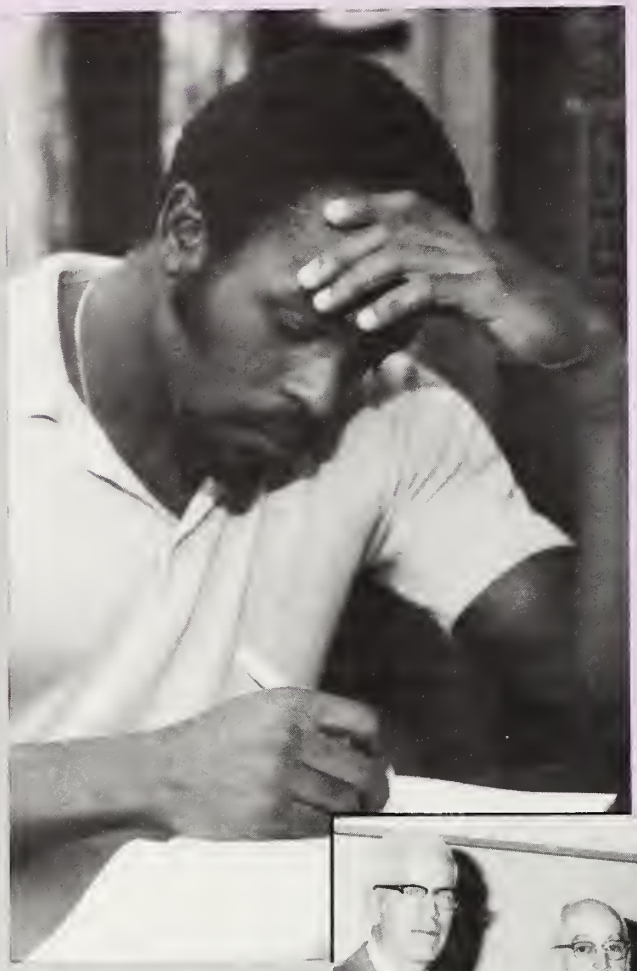
With regard to the leadership of the college during the period between today and June 30, 1987, the board has requested and I have agreed to continue to serve as president through December 31, 1986. My primary energies will be devoted to the sale of properties, the negotiation of faculty and staff contractual agreements, the disposition of financial resources, and legal considerations related to these decisions. Dr. Philip Van Bruggen will assume responsibilities as the Chief Administrative Officer during the period of January 1 to June 30, 1987.

Perhaps the ultimate measure of a Christian College is the integration of faith and knowledge. Our faith in God gives direction to knowledge, through a Biblical World View. Yet we know how

Continued on page 23

(Above) The outside of Vannah Hall, the main building on the Berkshire Christian College campus in Lenox, Massachusetts, Vannah Hall houses the library administration offices and classrooms. (Right) One of the dormitories on a New England winter day.

photos by Dennis L. Jones



(Left) One of the most common sites at Berkshire Christian College: studying. The colleges commitment to academic excellence and spiritual growth is marked by the accomplishments of its graduates. (Below) Four members of the BCC faculty pose with Pastors Orville Harvey (left) and Gordon Joines (right) at the 1983 Appalachian Advent Christian Association Pastor/Lay retreat. The four, (left to right) David A. Dean, Freeman Barton, Carl F. Ehle, and Oral Collins presented a series of workshops on prophecy and distinctive Advent Christian teachings.

photos by Dennis L. Jones

(Right) Past President Vincent Taber addresses a convocation of students at Chadsey Chapel in 1982. President Taber served the college from 1971-1983. (Below) The BCC men's soccer team in action. College athletic teams in basketball and soccer performed well in competition with other Bible schools.

photos by Dennis L. Jones

Japan Journeys

Ann Lay with two of her English students

"Your Father knows what you need before you ask him."

Matthew 6:8

This Scripture verse was demonstrated to us dramatically this past month as we prepared to move to a new house in Ikoma, Japan. One of the members of the Asukano church, Mrs. Katayama, and her family are going to Kenya for two years on business. They have graciously invited us to stay in their house for the year we are in Japan.

Before the Katayamas left for Kenya we walked over one morning so that they could show us what we should know about their house. When we were nearing the house, we could hear the phone ringing, so we waited a few minutes before knocking. When Mrs. Katayama came to the door we tried (unsuccessfully) to explain to her why we had come. Although Mrs. Katayama speaks some English, we were unable to make her understand what we wanted. After inviting us in, she excused herself, saying that Mrs. Iwata was on the phone. (Mrs. Iwata speaks very good English and translates for Steven when he preaches at the church.) When Mrs. Katayama returned she asked us to sit down and wait because Mrs. Iwata was coming over and she could interpret for us. Mrs. Iwata arrived shortly, explained what we wanted, and translated as Mrs. Katayama told us how the various appliances worked. Mrs. Iwata also told us that she had called that morning to offer to help Mrs. Katayama in any way she could.

Let me emphasize the sequence of events. At the *very* moment we were arriving at the house, Mrs. Iwata was calling to offer her help. We were not expecting to have difficulty communicating with Mrs. Katayama, but the Lord knew better. We didn't even know to ask for help, and already the Lord was providing it. What a wonderful God we serve! (See Isaiah 40:28-31)

—Steven and Ann Lay

Teaching English...And More

Much of my work as a short-term missionary here in Japan has focused on teaching English to Japanese women. Most of these women are non-Christians. Teaching English is not an end in itself, but rather a means to a greater end; namely, sharing the love of Jesus Christ.

My classes usually last about two hours. The first hour I teach conversational English. The second hour I have thirty minutes of Bible time followed by tea time. During the Bible time we discuss problems common to women the world over, such as loneliness, anxiety, and frustration. I always use the Bible as our authority and guide as we discuss these issues. As we share together in English I try to tell about experiences in my own life which testify of Christ's love and faithfulness.

For example, soon after we came to Japan I was especially lonely. I missed familiar things, as well as dear friends and family at home. I talked with Christ about the these feelings and sought His help in trying to work through them. It's circumstances like this that I share with my classes: real-life situations in which Christ has been my strength and comfort. It is my prayer that, as the Japanese women see Christ at work in my life, they will want him to be a living part of their lives, too.

Another meaningful aspect of my experience here in Japan has been the fellowship I've had with Japanese women who have already accepted Jesus. One such occasion was a 3-day retreat for wives of Japanese Advent Christian pastors held this past September. Twelve women, including Dorothy Warriner, Musa Powers and I, attended this retreat. What a special time we had together as we talked about common concerns and encouraged one another in our faith.

At one of the sessions I gave a 15-minute talk about Christ being all-sufficient. One of the Japanese wives translated each sentence into Japanese as I gave it in English. As I usually do, I used events from my own life to support my belief that Christ is indeed all-sufficient.

Afterwards one of the wives with limited English ability was eager to tell me in *English* how Christ had been all-sufficient in her life. She took me aside and with much effort slowly put her thoughts into English. What an inspiring and touching testimony this Japanese woman shared with me that morning! Words can't adequately express the joy we felt as we broke through the language barrier and together praised Christ for His many blessings to us.

I have also been privileged to fellowship on a weekly basis with Sadae Iwata, a Christian woman who speaks English fairly well and is from the Advent Christian Church here in Asukano. Each Wednesday morning we meet together in my home for an hour of Bible study and prayer. Currently, we are studying Evelyn Christensen's book *Lord, Change Me.*

I shall never forget a Wednesday morning about six weeks ago. It was only our second time to meet for study and prayer. I had opened our time together with prayer so I asked Sadae if she would like to close with a prayer in English (the week before she had prayed in Japanese). She paused for a moment and then proceeded to pray.

It wasn't until later that she told me that that had been the *first* time she had ever prayed in English. She had wanted to try for a long time, but just hadn't felt confident in her English ability. Tears came to both our eyes as we realized how significant an event this had been for her.

Yes, it truly is thrilling to be involved in a ministry that cuts through cultural barriers, and brings women from two such different cultures together as sisters in Christ. Please pray with me that more Japanese women will hear Christ's call and seek to follow Him. □

It's Time

Ezra 1, 2

Clayton Blackstone

The early hours of December 30, 1977 are as vivid in my memory as if they had occurred yesterday.

After nine months of waiting for the birth of our first-born, it was time. Although Cameo was due in mid-December, she chose to delay her arrival to remind us of who was in charge.

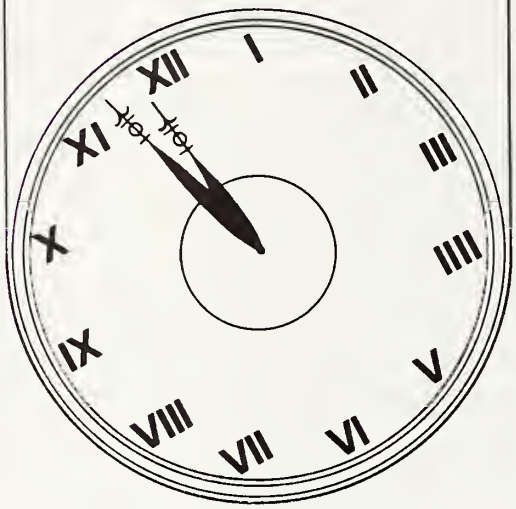
Since I was pulling for a tax deduction, I searched for ways to insure delivery on or before December 31. I even consulted others experienced in the field to uncover ways to rush the process.

Nothing worked. I tried rides over rough roads, physical exercise, spicy food and tuna fish. All that resulted was more waiting.

Unlike other nights when I slept with one eye open, I slept soundly on the night of the 30th. While Hazel showered and put on her make-up, I dreamed on. When I awoke no one slept beside me. As I bounded out of the bedroom I heard Hazel say to her mother, "The pains are five minutes apart. Should I call the doctor?"

There was nothing we could do to speed up or slow down the process. In one sense we became passive participants. (Although Hazel would argue that her involvement was anything but passive!)

One thing is for sure...when it's time, you move!



Awakening to God's drumbeat

A quote of Henry David Thoreau's glares at me from its resting place on the file cabinet next to my desk. It arouses me from my lethargy and points me to the task at hand. "If a man does not keep pace with his companions, perhaps it is because he hears a different drummer. Let him step to the music he hears, however measured or far away."

Organizations are no different than I am. Sometimes we lose the sense of what we are all about. For churches, maintaining buildings and preserving programs can become the driving force which justifies its existence. The denominational machinery keeps grinding away too. Like the church it may want to do what it set out to do years ago, but the preservation of the status quo subtly drowns out the drumbeat of mission. We sleep on.

We tend to stay in our slumber unless God awakens us. And He seeks to. The drumbeat is amplified in a hundred ways as He calls us to step to His cadence.

The writings of Ezra illustrate well what happens when people awake from Rip Van Winkle like slumber and move in the response to the drumbeat of God.

After five centuries of the highs and lows of kingly rule, Israel encountered disaster. They had experienced dark days before, but none of them blacker than the sacking of Jerusalem and deportation to Babylon in 587 B.C.

In response to their idolatry and wickedness God chose Babylon as His executor of judgment. In retrospect, it is clear that death was the forerunner of new birth. The cross always comes before resurrection. In what appeared to be the end, God gave birth to a little flock with the makings of a church.

These two centuries were the most formative period in Jewish history. Out of the ruins of the Jewish kingdom there came a small community of people ready to be God's people in practice as well as heritage.

The first six chapters of Ezra tell the story of the pioneers that came back to Judah and how they rebuilt their center of worship. Eighty years after the first

pilgrims left their secure lifestyle in Babylon, Ezra completed the renewal process. His story is told in the final four chapters.

God uses King Cyrus

The sense of mission that is evident through most of the book differs from many of our dreams. This mission would have profound implications on the kingdom God was building. The insights that emerge speak volumes to those of us who seek to march to the drumbeat of God.

"In the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, in order to fulfill the word of the Lord spoken by Jeremiah, the Lord moved the heart of Cyrus king of Persia to make a proclamation through his realm and put it in writing"... (Ezra 1:1)

There was nothing unusual about the proclamation. Unlike the rulers of Babylon, Cyrus encouraged his subjects to keep their native customs alive. He reasoned that if people had this freedom they would be happier under his rule. He even contributed to the rebuilding of the Temple.

Everything was routine...or was it? This wasn't simply a chance ruling. God was at work even if Cyrus and the Persians thought they were making the right political moves.

"This is what Cyrus king of Persia says: 'The Lord, the God of heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of the earth and he has appointed me to build a temple for him at Jerusalem in Judah. Anyone of his people among you — may his God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem in Judah and build the temple of the Lord, the God of Israel, the God who is in Jerusalem. And the people of any place where survivors may now be living are to provide him with silver and gold, with goods and livestock, and with freewill offerings for the temple of God in Jerusalem." (Ezra 1:2-4)

If normal procedures were followed, heralds of the king announced Cyrus's edict throughout the kingdom. In addition, a written copy of the ruling was posted and recorded to prevent misinterpretation and to be preserved for historical purposes.

God supplies for the need

It's clear from history that Cyrus was not a believer in the God of the Jewish people. As a worshipper of Marduk, his references to God were probably a result of the respect he desired to show all religions.

No matter what the reason, God stood behind the scene orchestrating circumstances, carefully cueing each musician. The score was known only to Him yet the resulting melody sounded of perfection par excellence.

With God at work, the climate was ripe for something to happen. The decision of a pagan king set the realization of His purpose in motion.

"Then the family heads of Judah and Benjamin, and the priests and Levites — everyone whose heart God had moved — prepared to go up and build the house of the Lord in Jerusalem" (Ezra 1:5).

We meet God at every turn in the story. He was at work in Cyrus to produce the right climate. In addition He was laboring to produce the needed labor pool.

It had been two hundred years since the Jewish political empire had begun to collapse. The great armies were gone. There was no powerful, dynamic king on the throne. Jerusalem resembled the devastated cities of Europe following World War 2.

The only ones left in Judah were a few poor, discouraged people trying to survive. They were so impoverished they lacked the resources to rebuild an altar for the necessary sacrifices.

In comparison to what was, they were just a handful. Throughout history the size of God's labor force has been insignificant. His interest has always been on the state of the heart. The things that would ultimately signal success for this delegation were ready leadership, ready laborers, ready givers and a sense that God was overseeing the expedition.

"All their neighbors assisted them with articles of silver and gold, with goods and livestock, and with valuable gifts, in addition to all the freewill offerings. Moreover, King Cyrus brought out the articles belonging to the temple of the Lord, which Nebuchadnezzar had carried away from Jerusalem and had placed in the temple of his god. Cyrus King of Persia had them brought by Mithredath the treasurer, who counted them out to Sheshbazzar the prince of Judah.

Continued on next page

"This was the inventory:

gold dishes	30
silver dishes	1,000
silver pans	29
gold bowls	30
matching silver bowls	410
other articles	1,000

"In all there were 5,400 articles of gold and of silver. Sheshbazzar brought all these along when the exiles came up from Babylon to Jerusalem.

"When they arrived at the house of the Lord in Jerusalem, some of the heads of the families gave freewill offerings toward the rebuilding of the house of God on its site. According to their ability they gave to the treasury for this work 61,000 drachmas of gold, 5,000 minas of silver and 100 priestly garments" (Ezra 1:6-11; 2:68, 69).

The people respond

With the final third of the equation in place the process of fleshing out the vision began.

There are some clouds on the horizon as we seek to see the text clearly. For instance, the totals don't match up to the individual entries. We're also not certain that the people who went up with Zerubbabel in chapter two are the same ones who went with Sheshbazzar in chapter one. We can't solve problems that have been around for centuries in such a short space. We'll leave that to the experts.

One thing is clear. God caused people to respond generously to the existing need. It took money to pay for the vision God had given.

Cyrus may have created the climate by stating that money was to be given to this group of homeward bound exiles, but he didn't tell them how much to give. The result was far beyond the bounds of routine generosity — six million, six hundred thousand plus in 1987 dollars according to my calculations.

The offering was free will in nature...according to each family's ability...undeniably generous.

What about us?

Twenty-three centuries separate us from the children of the exile. But time is about all that mark us as different from them.

We may gaze with nostalgia upon our history, but we cannot turn back the clock, even if we wanted to.

As a denomination, there is little value in clarifying our mission to pre-Civil war America. The first temple has come and gone. The role the Lord of the Church has in mind for us as we face the conclusion of the twentieth century is the agenda item at hand.

I'll leave that one for you to pray about for a while. As you do, let me suggest some ways to determine whether God is the author of the dream unfolding in your mind.

1. When God is the author of the vision, the climate is right, the personnel are ready, and the resources are available.

Probably no other generation has been so encouraged to reach for unreachable stars. We've been exhorted, encouraged, prodded, and manipulated in the name of the Lord.

It's hardly vintage Ezra 1. Today we launch voter registration drives to change government or attack them for harassing us. We beg for personnel. We turn on the guilt to loosen people's purse strings. The contrast is as stark as black against white.

I'm not arguing that we "let go and let God." We certainly bear our share of responsibility. Yet exploding in the text is the sense that God wants to play a far more significant role in the realization of kingdom building visions than we seem willing to give him these days.

2. We can't rush the process.

It is the point I illustrated at the beginning. It is true of any God-given vision. When He gets ready to move, we can't stop things if we try. Until He gets ready to move we can try one desperate measure after another with no success at inducing the birth process.

Nikos Kazantzakis in his book, *Zorba the Greek*, relates a very simple but poignant event that shaped much of his thought and participation in time. "I remember one morning when I discovered a cocoon in the bark of a tree, just as the butterfly was making a hole in its case and preparing to come out. I waited a while, but it was too long appearing and I was impatient. I bent over it and breathed on it to warm it. I warmed it as quickly as I could and the miracle began to happen before my eyes faster than life.

"The case opened. The butterfly started slowly crawling out and I shall never forget my horror when I saw how its wings were folded back and crumpled; the wretched butterfly tried with its whole trembling body to unfold them. Bending over it I tried to help it with my breath, in vain. It needed to be hatched out patiently. And the unfolding of the wings should be a gradual process in the sun. Now it was too late. My breath had forced the butterfly to appear all crumpled before its time. It struggled desperately and a few seconds later died in the palm of my hand.

"That little body is, I do believe, the greatest weight I have on my conscience. For I realized today that it is a mortal sin to violate the great laws of nature. We should not hurry. We should not be impatient. But we should confidently obey the eternal rhythm. If only that little butterly could always flutter before me to show me the way."

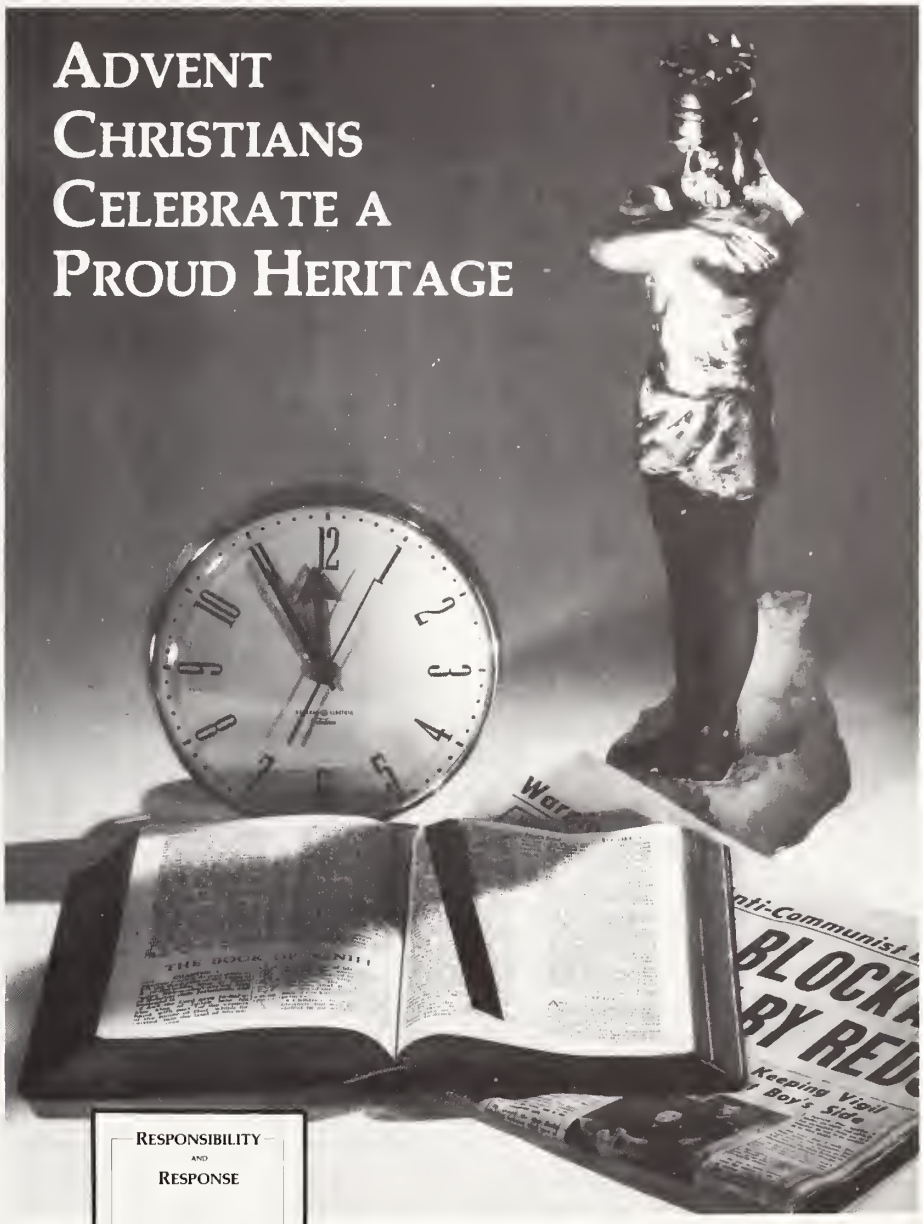
H.L. Mencken captured the spirit of visionless people when he wrote, "The basic fact about human experience is not that it is tragedy but that it is a bore. It is not that it is predominantly painful, but that it is lacking any sense."

It was the vision for rebuilding the Temple that called the remnant out of a snooze in the warm sunshine to greatness. Today the vision is different although the author is unchanged. He is still calling children of the exile out of boredom and purposelessness into the invigorating challenge of building His kingdom.

"Rise up O men of God!
Have done with lesser things;
Give heart, and soul and mind and strength
To serve the King of Kings."

"Rise up O men of God!
The church for you doth wait,
Her strength unequal to the task;
Rise up and make her great."
—Wm. P. Merrill □

Clayton Blackstone pastors the Advent Christian Church of New Hope in Lewiston, Idaho.



You can read about it in *Responsibility and Response*, Volume Two of the Advent Christian History Series.

Please send _____ copies of *Responsibility and Response* at $9.95 plus $1.25 postage for each copy.

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Responsibility and Response
Venture Bookstore
P.O. Box 23152 • Charlotte, NC 28212

Wanted—Moses Clones

(It's Tough Finding Leaders for God's People)

Robert Dingman

"We've gone for over a year without a pastor, but we can't seem to find the right man." "Our last leader was a wonderful man, but he couldn't handle this organization." Comments like these are heard in churches and Christian organizations across the country.

How do we find the right leader for our church or Christian organization? Several months ago. Pastor Bill Monroe of the Friendship ME Advent Christian Church came across the following article in the Houghton Milieu *and recommended it for publication in the* Advent Christian Witness. *Leadership is important and God calls us to use care in finding the right leaders for our churches and organizations.*

If you are a Christian who is old enough to begin to use the term "middle age" in a personal way, I suspect that you have by now seen an instance or two of poor Christian leadership. Whether your example was a church pastor, a denominational executive, or a leader of a parachurch organization, you have seen his or her withering impact and the turmoil of later taking corrective action.

Observers of the evangelical leadership scene can identify numerous instances where the careers of dedicated Christian workers have been wasted and financial resources dissipated. How could this happen when intelligent, godly people prayerfully weighed the fitness of each of these poor performers? Clearly, God appears to have made our walk to faith such that he allows us to make mistakes in choosing leaders for various parts of his own church, as paradoxical as that may seem.

In other cases, we can wonder why God allows a leader who has become inept or corrupt to continue in power. My tentative answer is that God knows that he is the ultimate victor and is not dismayed when such things happen. While he is always offended by disobedience, he is not surprised or in doubt about the final result.

Mind you, I did not say God does not care about a faltering church, college or mission group that is going down the tubes due to bad leadership. But for some reason, he does not reach down to correct the problem, but allows his followers to correct or ignore the problems.

Finding well qualified candidates for executive positions is hard work and Christian organizations have a particularly difficult task because of the scarcity of persons who combine the needed spiritual qualities and the managerial skills.

Handicaps in finding good leaders

Why is the search for Christian leadership so much tougher than for secular leaders? A major reason, I believe, is that so many

of the logical candidates were trained in theology or pastoral skills, but lack training in management skills in financial controls, program and personnel management. It speaks well of the innate talent and dedication of many who *have* succeeded in senior administrative roles despite their being virtually unprepared. Responsible boards of Christian organizations seem to be increasingly reluctant to run such risks, and are working harder to find the best possible talent to direct their denomination, college or evangelistic group.

Another severe limitation for Christian organizations seeking top leadership is the understandable need for a candidate to embody the distinctives of that group. That probably reduces the potential number of candidates by 50 to 70 percent.

The Christian culture impresses upon us the value of love, caring and such compassionate qualities. Running a Christian organization brings tough problems that require the ability to confront with courage issues of ethics, finance and efficiency that can seem to run contrary to being a caring, loving person. A secular manager will feel badly as people are terminated when sales drop, but he knows that he must act because of the basic purpose of the firm.

The Christian manager's caring sensitivities may immobilize him as he prays for the Lord's help instead of doing what must be done. He knows that his people are working at less than prevailing wages and have felt led of the Lord to serve there. This causes an understandable reluctance to counter that perception by terminating them, and this slowness to act can jeopardize the existence of the whole organization. Unlike in the business world, few Christian executives would welcome being known as "tough." But the business world better equips the manager for such difficult moments than does a stint as pastor, missionary or teacher. I see this deficiency in handling confrontation as a major weakness in Christian leadership.

What about character?

A similar weakness stems from Christian organizations drawing advice from "nice" people who are encouraged not to judge. When such nonjudgmental people then serve on a selection committee to choose a leader of a Christian enterprise, they often fail to ask probing questions and check out backgrounds in a detailed way that could have prevented a poor selection. "Nice" people find it almost impossible to inquire into areas that are not "nice," such as credit, poor health, morals, or marital discord.

Unhappily, leading a Christian organization does not assure that the leader is free of selfish motives, has good business judgment, or even in behaving ethically or morally. Even among God's people, we should not be amazed to occasionally find stupidity or sin in their lives. Those charged with the responsibility of selecting leaders for God's work must remain aware of this and apply appropriate tests. Although I began with a fairly healthy level of cynicism, I must confess that my recruiting in the Christian world has dismayed me in this regard.

Leaders who regularly feel they have God's message for the masses seem to sometimes view their perceptions as above the law of men and this can lead to problems that jeopardize an entire organization. If such a leader says to the Board of Directors that God told him/her to move in a direction the Board regards as unwise, it is really tough for the Board to disagree without saying, in effect "We don't believe God told you that because He hasn't told it to us." Anyone who claims divine messages obviously has a tactical advantage.

A highly competitive world

Today's Christian world is highly competitive in terms of fund raising, recruiting students or volunteers and quality leadership. Needed rapid change has been hard for people of a faith which they see as necessarily unchanged.

If the leadership is not sensitive to such areas as fund raising and recruiting personnel, they may well alter a "changeless Gospel" by a changing technology. Within the changes being made lie ethical dilemmas for the sensitive leader of a Christian organization.

Increasingly, there seems to be

Continued on page 23

Caroline Michael
Director

The Gift I Would Give a Leader

Ruth Senter stimulated my thinking when she addressed the women's commission at the National Association of Evangelicals Convention. In her initial preparation for this speech, she contemplated a number of gifts for leaders. Her conclusion was the greatest gift she could give to a leader is the invitation to risk — the invitation to trust God, to let God be God in your life.

Ruth Senter is editor of *Partnership* magazine. She and her husband live in Wheaton, Illinois and have two children.

I want to share with you some nuggets I jotted down from her talk. First, an illustration about Canadian geese...

The geese were flying south in the airways for winter. In the late afternoon they settled down in a farmer's barnyard and feasted on his corn. The following morning they heard other geese flying by and started to join them. They had gotten well above the tree tops when they thought of the safety and comfort of the barnyard and decided they needed more rest and more of the farmer's corn. This procedure continued for several mornings. They climbed a shorter distance each day, and found they had less strength for flying. By the fifth morning they decided they needed the whole winter in the barnyard. The result was these geese stayed there for the rest of their lives.

Partnership *editor Ruth Senter speaks to the National Association of Evangelical Women's Commission at their last convention.*

photo by Ron Howard, courtesy NAE

How like Canadian geese we are, especially when God asks us to start off on an exciting adventure of following Him. The early Christians had to risk the wrath of Rome. But they followed Jesus' command and spread the "good news" to all the known world. The apostles literally gave their lives for this cause.

Jim Elliot and his four companions risked their lives to share the gospel with the Auca Indians in South America.

Do we resist stepping out when we don't know the costs? For many of us we have a need to live safely, to move in circles we know and in which we feel comfortable.

Risk doesn't come naturally. It's easier not to have to face the unknown consequences. Do you pray, "Please, God, don't send me across my yard to my neighbor whom I've heard cursing You and invite her to a Bible study?"

We read in Matthew 14 that Peter was asked to risk. The disciples in the boat saw what they thought was a ghost on the lake. Then Christ called Peter to come. Risk sometimes means being willing to be afraid for awhile. Peter was frightened. He began to sink. We also have to be ready to endure fears for awhile. If I'm never willing to be scared, I'll never get out of the boat.

Picture a trapeze artist. At times he has to be willing to let go of one trapeze to grab the next one. Trusting God means that for a brief time we may have to be out of control, be willing to be afraid, and even be willing to fail.

What did Peter have to show for his attempt to step out of the boat and walk on the water in faith? In his fear, he took his eyes off Jesus and began sinking. Jesus said, "Peter, why did you doubt me?" Jesus rescued Peter, but I doubt that anyone congratulated Peter on his faith that day. Peter did the human thing; we sometimes do the human thing. We have to be ready to face failure if we dare to risk.

There are three things we can do with our fears. First, we need to look at our fears, analyze them,

and consider why we are afraid. Second, verbalize them; get them out in the open so we can face them realistically. Ask yourself the question, "What is keeping me from trusting God one hundred percent?"

Thirdly, we need to visualize getting rid of these fears. Ruth Senter suggested visualizing putting them all in a brown paper bag, taking them to the foot of the cross, and giving them to God.

Learn to risk by saying "yes" to new experiences, to new people. It isn't too difficult to risk trying a new recipe. Is it too hard to step down the street to make friends with a neighbor? Let God be for you all you can't be for yourself.

Many of us have a big fear of rejection. Try small risks first. Be willing to teach a three-year-old Sunday school class; be willing to visit patients in a nursing home. In either case you'll come away feeling loved.

When we trust God, we give opportunity for our faith to grow. We also will model for our children and for others what it means to have faith — to let God be God in our lives.

Learn to risk. Look to the greatest "risk taker" of all — the Lord Jesus. □

The cassette tape "Gifts I Should Give a Leader" by Ruth Senter may be borrowed from Media Center, P.O. Box 23152, Charlotte, NC 28212, for $1 plus postage and handling.

Missions Day at Santa Cruz

Steve Overstreet of the Far East Broadcasting Company was the speaker at the annual missions day. He and his family will soon be going to the Philippines to serve the Lord there through FEBC.

President Grace Hughes presided over the annual business meeting of the Northern California WHFMS Conference. The women pledged $250 toward expenses of the Camp at Santa Cruz; voted to send $100 each to Oro Bible College in Cagayan, Philippines and Shijonawate Bible Institute in Japan; voted to send $100 to the Advent Christian Village; and voted to send $50 for the *Minute Men* call for the ministry of the Ssebikindus in Memphis. They are anticipating a two-day retreat with Fern Smith for February.

Trained Resource Persons

Left to right: Charlotte Taylor, Phyllis DuBois, and Berniece Porter

We're pleased to report a good number of requests for TRPs have been coming to the Department of Women's Ministries. They will be processed on a first come, first served basis.

All local WHFMS presidents in the Central, Eastern, and Southern regions have been sent a form for requesting the services of a TRP. There is a folder in the program kit with information about the TRP program and also a request form.

There was much enthusaism at the two training events in the Central Region during October. These TRP seminars in Chicago and Bristow, Oklahoma have added sixteen more TRPs to our list of qualified resource persons.

The pictures show two of the small groups working at Hope Church in Chicago.

Left to right: Lois Dotson, Ruth Carter, Charlene Reas, and Janice Hayse

Intrigued ladies at the Bristow, Oklahoma TRP seminar

WHFMS Sunday Observances

Four Oaks, North Carolina

The ladies of the Dona Harrison Circle of Barbour's Chapel dramatized the play, "Bring Life to our World," using a banner displaying this theme at the front of the sanctuary. Another effective prop was a beautiful fountain with the sign, "Fountain of Life. Free drinks available to all." Participants included Shirley West, Helen Stanley, Joyce Raynor, Ella Martin, Barbara Jackson, and Jackie Barbour. Susie Byrd sang a solo, the Sounds of Praise trio presented a number, and the choir ministered under the direction of Rodney Barbour.

Columbus, Ohio

Several ladies participated in the morning worship service including Janet Burgess, Janet Cunningham, and Helen Sims. The guest speaker was Betty Bockover, Ohio WHFMS Conference President from Sparta.

Mendota, Illinois

The evangelism-missions play, "Bring Life to our World," was presented by Ellen Haight, Sharon Henry, Karen Estes, Diana Rod, Julie Haight, and Betsy Collings. Myrtle Collings, Annie Gullion, and Lorena Lucas also participated in the worship service. Pastor Clarence DuBois commended the ladies for the services they give within the church and community, and for their outreach ministries.

Video Featured at Missouri Valley WHFMS

Vice-president Lorene Neal presented a videotape, "Men's and Women's Roles," for the program at the recent WHFMS Conference meeting in Villisca, Iowa. This video is one in the series *The Christian Family: A Woman's Perspective* produced by D.C. Cook Publishing Company. On the video Elisabeth Elliot shares her views on masculinity and femininity and describes three equalities and four inequalities that exist between men and women. A time of discussion followed the viewing.

Outgoing president Ruby Woody Robertson presided and led the opening devotions. The Conference voted to give fifty dollars to the Joshua Project and fifty dollars to the WHFMS Central Region foreign mission project. Thirty dollars for expense money was given to each of the three women attending the TRP Seminar in Bristow, Oklahoma.

The new officers include: President Lorene Neal, Vice-president Ruth Stump, Secretary Grace Groves, Treasurer Zola James, and Auxiliary Superintendent Debbie Hutchings.

Washington Conference Women

A many-faceted program held the interest of the thirty-eight women at the WWBC annual WHFMS meeting in Seattle. Pastor Rick Reynolds shared the importance of women to Jesus in his devotional talk, "The Woman Bent Double."

Beverly Teshera spoke on the subject, "Setting Goals to Become the Women God Wants You to Be." She used Scripture from Psalm 139 and Jeremiah 29:11.

After the luncheon, the new slide set featuring the Jewett's ministry in Cebu, Philippines was shown. Lauri Reynolds and Pauline Craven sang two vocal numbers. There was time included to teach the ladies to do candlewicking and each one made a square which will be used for a quilt top.

President Nancy Winslow presided. The Conference voted to send two ladies for the Trained Resource Seminar when a time and place are established with Caroline Michael. Each local took the names of several missionaries as their special responsibility to minister to during the year. Marlene Forester, Virginia Rorvig, and Marion Beebe were named as delegates to the Western Region WHFMS meeting at Portland last October.

The annual spring retreat will be held at Oak Harbor April 24-26, 1987.

Missions Conference at Hampstead, NC

Missionary Marion Damon from Kodaikanal, India was the featured speaker for a weekend at Blake's Chapel. People from neighboring Advent Christian churches were invited to share in a salad supper for women on Friday and for a family night on Saturday. Marion also delivered a challenging message on Sunday morning.

Changes in Guidelines for Growth

As you WHFMS leaders plan your year and consider carefully how you will implement your goals, please notice the changes on the blue copy of the Guidelines for Growth in the 1987 program kit. The changes are outlined below for your convenience.

II. Education

Statement A. includes what was formerly in both A. and B.

Statement B. suggests using the program kit for six or more meetings.

Statements C. and D. were formerly D. and E. respectively.

Statement E. is new and encourages you to utilize a Trained Resource Person.

IV. Outreach

Statement D. is changed. You are encouraged to observe WHFMS Sunday as the one public program in your church.

VI. Involvement

Statement B. includes what was in B. and C. formerly.

Statements C. and D. were formerly D. and E. respectively.

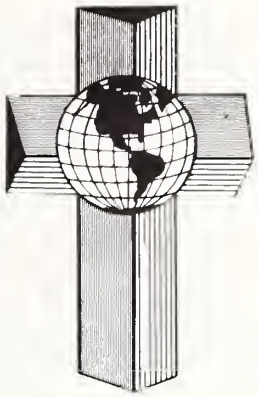
Utilizing a TRP in your local/church will replace former statement F.

All of the above will be reflected in the report form you will be using in January 1988 to report on your achievements in 1987.

Reports Are Due

We anticipate hearing from all WHFMS groups and other organizations involving our women. Please notice in particular the two survey questions at the end of the report form: tell us what you've accomplished in evangelism and give the names of any deceased WHFMS members. These names are for a memorial booklet for General Conference in June.

Mission Prayer Partnership



JANUARY

19 **Praise** God that the Shijonawate Christian Institute has recently reopened. **Pray** there will be many who will desire to enroll as students in the school.

20 **Praise** the Lord for many decisions in four churches in Kuala Lumpur recently.

21 **Praise** the Lord for increased attendance and decisions for Christ in Memphis. **Pray** for **Francis** and **Lynn Ssebikindu** as they labor for Christ and us there.

22 **Praise** the Lord for a new church starting in the state of Palang, Malaysia.

23 **Praise** the Lord for the opportunity **Floyd Powers** has to preach Sunday mornings at a new Hilton Hotel in Osaka, Japan.

24 **Pray** for **Musa Powers** as she assists Floyd in the work in Kobe.

25 **Pray** for **Dave Vignali** as he serves as business manager and treasurer in the **Philippines.**

26 **Pray** for Advent Christians in China. **Pray** that the work will continue to grow.

27 **Pray** for winter youth retreats in the next couple of months throughout our denomination. **Pray** that many young people will find Christ as their Saviour and Lord and dedicate their lives to full-time service.

28 **Pray** for **Marion Damon** that she might have physical strength and spiritual blessing as she goes about her deputation work.

29 **Pray** for **Judy Jewett** as she teaches Sunday school and cares for her family. May the Lord send a special blessing for her birthday today.

30 **Pray** for **Frank Jewett** that God will bless his leadership of a growing church in Cebu and that he will be able to learn the Cebuano language.

31 **Pray** for Nigerian superintendent E. A. Akpan, that God will guide him in the many decisions in the Nigerian work.

FEBRUARY

1 **Pray** for Alice Mullis, secretary in the World Missions office, as she oversees many responsibilities of this office.

2 **Pray** for the Executive Vice-president **David Northup** as he guides us in a program of advance.
3 **Pray** for **Thambusamy** and **Victoria Devairakkam** as they labor for the Lord in the growing work in **Malaysia.**
4 **Pray** for the Missionary Advisory Council as they meet with World Missions Director **Rev. Harold Patterson** in planning for the expansion of our mission work.
5 **Pray** for open doors to new mission fields.
6 **Pray** for **Beryl Joy Hollis** as she seeks to expand our work in the Madras area.
7 **Pray** for the **Executive Council** of the General Conference as they begin meetings today.
8 **Pray** for more men for the Memphis work.
9 **Pray** for **Barbara White** as she encourages the young pastors in the Kodaikanal area.
10 **Pray** for the long range Planning Committee as they seek God's will for our future.
11 **Pray** for the many national pastors on each of our fields that God would bless their ministry for Christ.
12 **Pray** for **Lucas** and **Beulah Devasahayam** as God uses them to win souls in Malaysia.
13 **Pray** for **Alice Brown** as she directs **Oro Bible College** and serves as acting superintendent in the **Philippines.**
14 **Pray** for **Margaret Helms** for safety as she travels on her deputation work.
15 **Pray** that the Lord would raise up those interested in Hispanic ministries.
16 **Pray** that the **Capital Funds Drive** will be successful in expanding our work in **India, Malaysia,** and the **Philippines.**
17 **Pray** for **Steve** and **Ann Lay** as they minister in the Asukano area.
18 **Pray** for **Austin** and **Dorothy Warriner** as they seek to reach many Japanese people for Christ.

Mission Directory

INDIA

Barbara White (January 14)
Box 17, Andivilla
Kodaikanal 624101
INDIA

Beryl Joy Hollis (December 16)
American Advent Mission
Velacheri, Madras 600 042
INDIA

JAPAN

Steven Lay (November 28)
Ann Lay (September 13)
Beth Lay (March 26, 1975)
Timothy Lay (June 18, 1977)
3-2-35 Asukano Minami
Ikoma Shi, 630-01
JAPAN

Austin Warriner (January 1)
Dorothy Warriner (January 18)
Japan Advent Christian Mission
3-37 Okayama Higashi 5 Chome
Shijonawate Shi
Osaka Fu 575
JAPAN

Floyd Powers (October 8)
Musa Powers (February 28)
Rebecca Powers (November 11, 1971)
1478 Shironomae
Mikage-Cho
Higashinada-Ku
Kobe 658
JAPAN

MALAYSIA

Thambusamy Devairakkam
Victoria Devairakkam
Advent Christian Church
3A, Jalan Sayang Housing Trust
86000 Kluang, Johor
MALAYSIA

Lucas Devasahayam
Beulah Devasahayam
A.C. Bethel Church
30, Taman Gembira
Post kod-42700
Banting, Selangor
MALAYSIA

PHILIPPINES

Frank Jewett (December 1)
Judy Jewett (January 29)
Danny Jewett (June 13, 1976)
Timmy Jewett (June 26, 1978)
Letitia Jewett (April 13, 1980)
P.O. Box 263
Cebu City 6401
PHILIPPINES

David Vignali (May 10)
P.O. Box 263
Cebu City 6401
PHILIPPINES

Alice Brown (March 24)
Box 223
Cagayan de Oro City 8401
PHILIPPINES

Howard Towne (May 5)
Anna May Towne (June 11)
Dansalan College Foundation
P.O. Box 5430
Iligan City 8801
PHILIPPINES

MEMPHIS MISSION

Francis Ssebikindu (May 13)
Lynne Ssebikindu (May 8)
Faith Nancy (September 28, 1982)
Ashley Grace (January 21, 1985)
2590 Faxon Ave.
Memphis, TN 38112

ON LEAVE

Bessie Smith (March 27)
Box 657, Waukewan Street
Meredith, NH 03253

ON FURLOUGH

Marion Damon (March 27)
c/o Mrs. Elbert Damon
209 Wendell Road
Miller's Falls, MA 01349

Margaret Helms (September 18)
3612 Brief Rd. E
Monroe, NC 28110

*The missionaries' birthdates follow their names.

BCC Suspends Operations From pg. 6

often as individuals and as a community of believers that knowledge apart from the guiding motivation of God's love can easily go astray. In 1 Corinthians 13:2 we read..."and if I understand all knowledge...but have not love, I am nothing."

The cornerstone of *this* college has always been to "seek the truth in love" and to be committed to "do it" in the whole of life. The quality of that sense of community is what has defined us as an institution, and given distinctiveness to it. I trust and fervently pray that in the difficult days ahead, as you seek understanding, and as you go through a range of emotions about what has come your way, that you can truly put into practice what you have learned...that "unconditional love" which characterizes the nature of God, and which is our human commission through the Good News of the gospel, will permeate your beings and soothe your souls.

Go in peace. □

Berkshire Christian College President Lloyd Richardson delivered these remarks to the faculty, staff, and students on Monday morning, November 16, 1986.

Wanted-Moses Clone From pg. 17

greater efforts to seek out better qualified leaders, and the pressure to do so is unlikely to abate.

One reason for the shortage of leaders today is the proliferation of organizations. Many of these will fail and should, because they were ill-conceived and poorly led.

A second reason is that mass media has made possible the rapid accumulation of vast funds that require substantial numbers of administrators and managers to run the college, political programs, church, broadcasts, and "back office" operations. Perhaps the day has come in this electronic age when, for each outstanding expounder of the Word, we also need a direct mail specialist, an accountant and a TV director.

Christian colleges, seminaries and pastors could help the future of Christian leadership by encouraging young people to see managerial and administrative roles as places of service equal in spiritual stature with preaching, teaching, and the healing arts.

While growing up in a Christian home and during my years at Houghton, I always had the feeling that those called to do preaching/teaching/healing, were God's choicest servants and the rest of us were second class Christians. In more recent years, I have become painfully aware that the dedicated lives of people in those special callings can be misused and abused if there are not talented people in administrative/management roles to support and manage those ministries.

There is hope!

The limited view I have had of the evangelical leadership scene encourages me to believe that, with increased diligence, the leadership requirements of the many Christian organizations can be met satisfactorily, but it won't be easy. Reliance on the Lord's leading will always be essential, but the time has come when some new methods and insights can help discern what that leading might be.

For starters, board of trustees/directors should get more deeply involved rather than be somewhat passive observers. They should be prepared to take corrective action, know what is going on in the organization, and not be content to just accept the president's report at face value.

Second, board members should recognize that very few leaders can meet their expectations of combining the attributes of being an outstanding communicator, a deeply spiritual person, a superb fund raiser, and a good administrator...and always a male, of course.

Third, trustees should be more aware that some positions are so demanding and all-consuming, that they should be restructured or, at the very least, provision be made for sabbaticals or other devices to counter burnout.

Fourth, board members should finally lay to rest the feeling that to pay leaders what the position is worth by secular standards is somehow evil and indefensible to their constituency. Undoubtedly, the Puritans authored the "poorness is a virtue" canard, but today it keeps many talented Christian leaders from applying their skills to Christian organizations. Better attention to compensating Christian leaders could create substantial numbers of talented new leaders, I believe.

As Christian organizations get increasingly complex, so does the leadership task. Perhaps it should not surprise us that choosing new leaders should also be more challenging in this fast-moving world. Moses found out how tough it was to lead God's people. It doesn't appear that times may have changed very much in that regard, and today we seem to need many leaders with his qualities. □

Robert Dingman operates an executive search firm. Reprinted with permission from Houghton Milieu.

3

A0048 48
University of North Carolina
Serials Dept. Davis Library
060 A
Chapel Hill, NC 27514

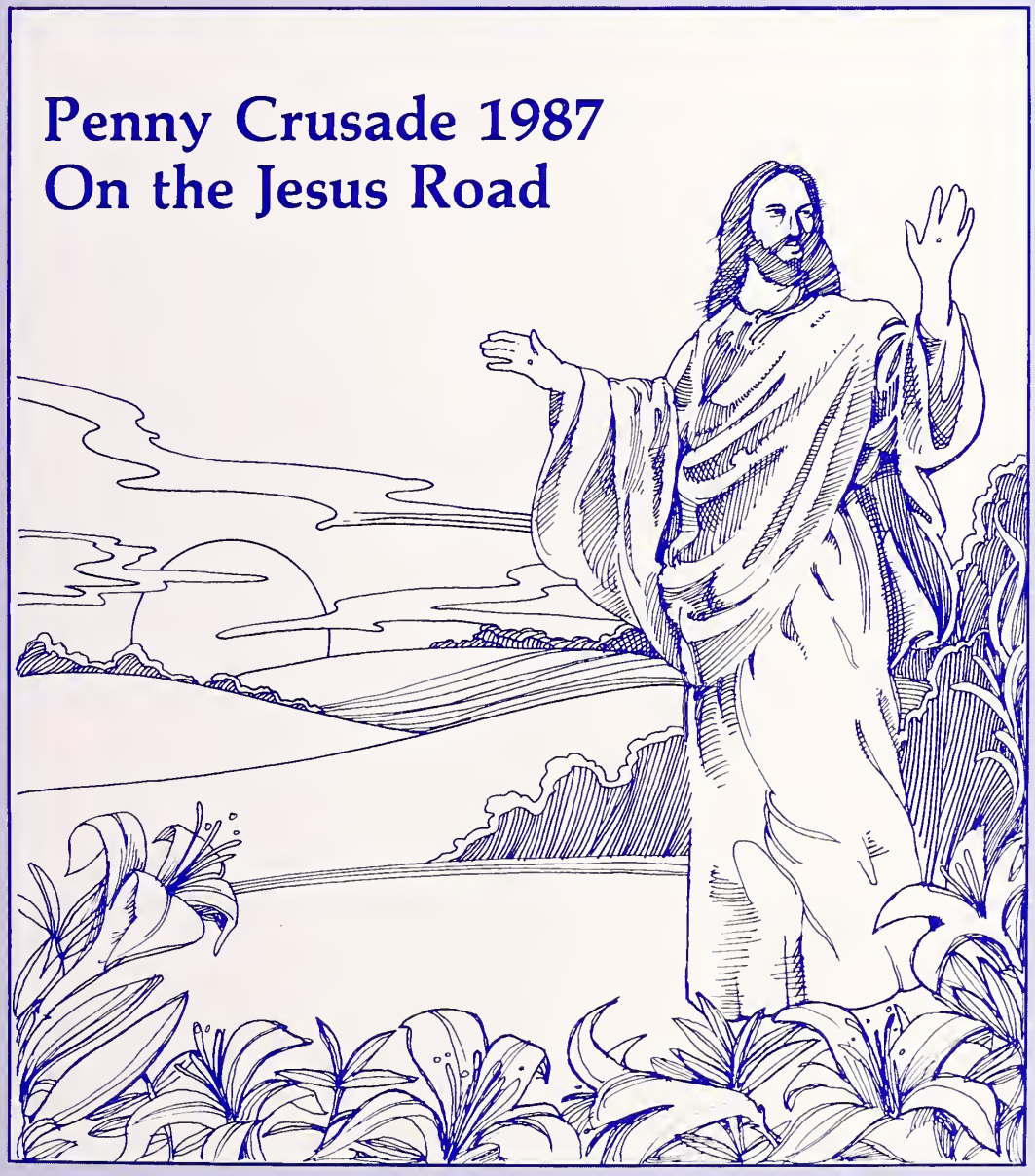
ADVENT CHRISTIAN
GENERAL CONFERENCE
P.O. Box 23152
14601 Albemarle Road
Charlotte, NC 28212

C286.7
A24

Advent Christian WITNESS

February 1987

Penny Crusade 1987
On the Jesus Road



Member
epa
Evangelical Press Association

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
Robert J. Mayer

MISSIONS
Harold Patterson

WHFMS
Caroline M. Michael

GRAPHIC ARTS
Linda Perault

TYPESETTING
Susan Gettis

MEMBER MISSION

EVANGELICAL COUNCIL FOR FINANCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY
ECFA
MEMBER
The symbol of trust

Advent Christian Witness (ISSN 0741-4307) is published monthly except for a combined July-August issue, 11 times a year, by the Advent Christian General Conference of America, 14601 Albemarle Road, P.O. Box 23152, Charlotte, NC 28212. Postmaster: Send address changes to *Advent Christian Witness*, P.O. Box 23152, Charlotte, NC.

Policy: As the official publication of the Advent Christian General Conference of America, the *Advent Christian Witness* publishes the teachings of the Advent Christian Church and promotes the task of evangelism both in North America and throughout the world.

Rates in the U.S. and Canada: one year, $11.00. Single Copy, $1.00. Overseas one year, $14.00.

All articles and materials are copyright ©1987 by the Advent Christian General Conference unless otherwise indicated. Permission to reprint available upon request. The views expressed in this magazine are those of the author and may not necessarily reflect those of the editor or the Advent Christian General Conference.

from the editor

Watching From the Pews?

Dallas Cowboys' Coach Tom Landry has been credited with the following description of the game he coaches, "Football is twenty-two guys desperately needing rest being watched by 60,000 who desperately need exercise." Being a person who loves spectator sports, I ponder that statement whenever I sit down to watch a game on television or enter a sports arena to join thousands of cheering fans.

Coach Landry's observaton might ring true when we think of the Christian church. Research shows that in most congregations, twenty percent of the people do eighty percent of the work. If we picked one word to describe Christianity in the 1980's, "spectatorism" would be a strong candidate. Pastors and church leaders of every stripe say it's becoming harder and harder to find Christians willing to serve Christ through ministries of the local church.

Two reasons emerge for this growing spectatorism. First, most of us want the freedom to go wherever we want whenever we want. If we commit to a local church ministry, we fear we might miss something better or more enjoyable.

But there's another reason. Most churches have a difficult time giving people significant jobs and the training to do them effectively. How many times have we thrown new Sunday school teachers into a classroom with no training? How many times have we handed a task to someone with no instruction? How many times have we passed over new members for significant jobs because we were afraid we might lose influence or power? Do we tend to think of our church or God's church?

Tough questions. But they are questions that demand answers if we're to do God's will in our churches. The New Testament challenges all believers to serve Jesus Christ. Ministry isn't just the job of the pastor. God calls each of us to actively serve him. For that to happen, Advent Christian congregations need to make sure they're providing significant opportunities and training for people to effectively serve our Lord.

Also, for each of us, service grows out of our love for Christ. Recently, the football quarterback, Joe Montana, returned to play after serious back surgery. Many people, including a number of orthopaedic surgeons, thought he was taking a tremendous risk. After all, he didn't have to play. Money was not a problem. But one of his teammates summed up why Joe Montana returned when he stated, "Joe has a passionate love for the game of football."

How many of us can claim the same passionate love for Jesus Christ? The stronger our love for our Lord, the more our Christian faith will be characterized by service, not by "spectatorism". How about you? Are you a spectator or a servant? □

Volume 35 Number 2

Advent Christian WITNESS

February 1987

FEATURES

Three Things About Prayer G. Roger Schoenhals 4
Prayer is central to an effective Christian life. Three things to help you be effective in communicating with God.

First Things First Clayton Blackstone 8
The second of a series dealing with the Book of Ezra.

Setting Free of the Sun and Stars Ann Teshera 12
A student's poem about the democratic revolution in the Philippines brings a response from that nation's president.

Penny Crusade 1987 13
A review of last year's successful Crusade and a challenge from Harold Patterson, Director of World Missions.

I Must Decide for Life Ralph Dodge 17
A look at the life of noted Advent Christian pastor Norval S. Richardson

Penny Crusade: Showers of Blessing Edward A. Dowd 20
One congregation's experience with Penny Crusade leads to blessing and growth.

ON THE COVER

This year's Penny Penny Crusade theme is "On the Jesus Road." Penny Crusade symbolizes the strong Advent Christian commitment to sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ with lost men and women, boys and girls, around the world.

DEPARTMENTS

From the Editor 2

Women's Ministries 22

Prayer Partnership 25

Mission Directory 26

Charles Colson 27

Three Things About Prayer

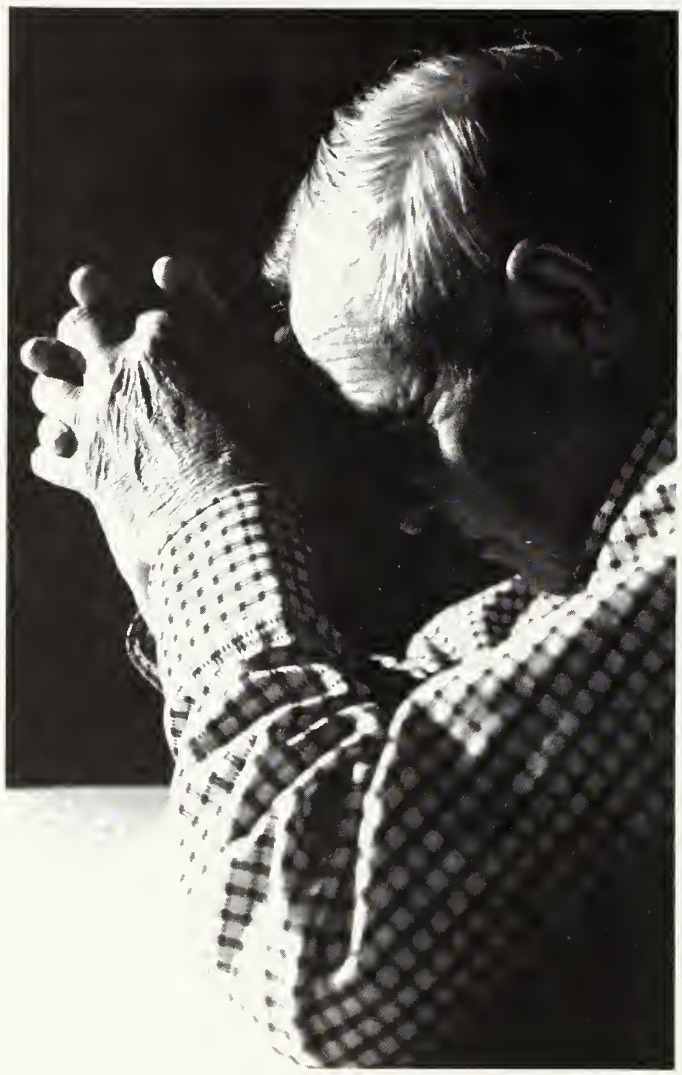
G. Roger Schoenhals

When you pray, Jesus said, go into your closet and shut the door.[1] Have you ever done that? I mean, literally, have you ever gone inside a closet, shut the door, and prayed?

I tried it once. Among the hangers, clothes, and shoes I got down on my knees and prayed. I remember feeling odd and a bit claustrophobic.

Surely Jesus meant more than physically placing oneself in a closet. I think he was getting at the idea that personal prayer is a private matter and one demanding effort in shutting out competing thoughts.

He was saying that serious prayer requires concentration; and concentration is work. So the first thing to say about prayer is this: Prayer is work.



Prayer is work

Shutting out inner and outer distractions takes effort. And so does the practice of having a consistent prayer time. I've made countless resolutions to get up early and spend time alone with God in prayer.

Then comes the morning after a short night. I'm groggy and sluggish. *I'll do it later,* I tell myself. Then I reset the alarm and sink back into slumber.

If I try to establish a regular time later in the day, I battle both expected and unexpected interruptions. Like most busy people, I'm plagued by pressures, deadlines, phone calls, "emergencies," and on and on. Sometimes I think the Devil works overtime just to keep me from prayer.

I also find it difficult to pray for others. By the time I finish imploring God for my needs I'm ready to get on with my day. To linger longer and lift others up to God takes added effort. My interests are so demanding, their interests seem far away. It's hard to consistently intercede for others.

Another arduous aspect of prayer is to wait silently before the Lord. Even though the Scriptures tell us to "Be still and know that I am God,"[2] and "they who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength,"[3] I have a hard time just sitting there. When I finish my list I'm anxious to say, "Amen." Listening for the Lord to speak is hard work.

Prayer is toilsome when answers are delayed. I was unemployed for more than a year and it became increasingly difficult to keep bringing that need before the Lord. I was frustrated and impatient. I found it hard to wait and fit into the Lord's timing.

Finally, prayer is work when we truly say, "Not my will, but Thine be done." The Bible describes great agony as Jesus

prayed this prayer in the Garden.[4] Sincere prayer requires our total submission to God.

Consider some of the other examples of strenuous prayer found in the Scriptures. Abraham interceded long and hard for Sodom;[5] Jacob wrestled with the angel;[6] Moses agonized over his people;[7] David poured out his heart in a wrenching prayer of repentance;[8] Solomon prayed earnestly at the dedication of the Temple;[9] Hezekiah prayed desperately for help concerning the invasion of Sennacherib;[10] Ezra, "weeping and casting himself down," interceded for the Israelites.[11]

In the New Testament we read of Jesus rising long before daylight to pray.[12] Paul prayed "earnestly night and day" for his friends.[13] In the Upper Room, the 120 "devoted themselves to prayer."[14] The Church in Jerusalem made "earnest prayer" for Peter.[15] The Church in Antioch sent out Paul and Barnabas only after "fasting and praying."[16]

Serious prayer involves serious effort. There are, of course, those occasions when prayer seems effortless and even enjoyable. Usually, though, such times are preceded by periods of sustained effort. There's simply no getting around it: Prayer is work.

Prayer leads to work

The second great fact about prayer is this: Prayer leads to work. In the Lord's prayer we say, "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us." The relationship is clear: If we want God's forgiveness, we must forgive others—even those we've grown to dislike. Does that not require the hardest kind of work? Indeed, how can we do this apart from God's grace in our lives?

True prayer is self-involving. For example, if a student asks God to help him do well on a test he better crack the books and study. If I pray for distressed people in my community, I'd better be right in there doing my part to help meet their needs. And how can I pray for overseas missionaries and not lift a finger to write an encouraging word or open my wallet to send needed funds?

Someone has said that we are God's hands and feet. It is through His human instruments that He accomplishes His will. He uses our meager resources to answer our prayers. Like the child with the little sack lunch, God multiplies our gifts and efforts far beyond our expectations. But, first, we must be willing to become involved in His answer to our prayers.

William Runyan, the hymn writer, said it like this:

Lord, I have shut the door,
Strengthen my heart;
Yonder awaits the task—I share a part.

Peter Marshall, former Chaplain of the United States Senate, once said, "Let us be part of the answer and not part of the problem." When I pray, am I willing to roll up my sleeves and be part of the answer? Someone has said, "Prayer without work is hypocrisy; work without prayer is presumption."

Prayer doesn't end when we say, "Amen." That's just the beginning. We have uttered a prayer, now we must live it. Prayer leads to work.

Prayer works!

The third basic fact about prayer is simply: Prayer works. We see this in Scripture, in history, in the church, and in our personal experience. The poet writes:

I know not by what methods rare,
But this I know—God answers prayer.

I have found this abundantly true. When I completed graduate school we were at a loss to know where to go and what to do. We had a five-week-old son and no money.

We committed our way to the Lord and began to pack our belongings. Soon, we believed, God would reveal His answer to our prayers.

A few opportunities appeared on the horizon and we dutifully checked them out. But we felt uncomfortable with them and so we continued to pray—and wait.

Within two weeks our prayers were marvelously answered and we set sail for a position that seemed to perfectly match our needs, abilities, and expectations.

A few weeks ago I interviewed a Christian man who has been healed of acute leukemia. The doctors warned him months ago that he had only days to live. As the news spread, thousands

(literally) of Christians across the country prayed for God to intervene in his life. The doctors are now saying, "We've never seen anything like this." We are hearing the word, "miracle."

But we don't have to look to the spectacular for evidence of answered prayer. We find it in a multitude of little things that occur along the way. He helps us recall things. He helps us forgive offending foes. He helps us accomplish difficult tasks. He helps us discover His daily will for our lives.

Prayer brings us close to the heart of God where we find our perspectives and priorities sharpened. Prayer unleashes inner strength and confidence. Prayer brings peace and causes us to rejoice.

Sometimes the answer is no, sometimes yes. Sometimes we receive the answer immediately and sometimes it's delayed. But one thing we know for sure: when we pray in faith, God will grant us the answer that is best for us. He always answers our cries according to His infinite love, wisdom, and power.

I read a little ad in a magazine once that encouraged readers to send in prayer requests. Checking into the ad I discovered a man, 86-years old, who is living in a retirement home. He takes these requests and puts them into a box. Each Saturday night he gathers together some of the old elderly folks and they pray for the hundreds of requests in the box.

Pressing my inquiry further I discovered that this man has believed in the power of prayer most of his life. He is enthusiastic about prayer and he recounts a list of answers a mile long. One religious leader said of him, "He has done more to promote prayer than any one I know."

For several years I read the submissions to an annual writing contest for a religious magazine. Nearly 1,000 articles addressed the subject, "God's Help in Time of Crisis." Though different in many respects, all the manuscripts proclaimed one central message: prayer works.

The evangelist, Billy Graham, was once asked what his secret was. Without hesitation he said, "Prayer."

It was Tennyson who wrote: "More things are wrought by prayer than the world dreams of."

Prayer is the greatest force in all the world. It's the wheel that moves the Church. It's the key that unlocks the blessings of God.

Jesus said that we "ought always to pray and not lose heart."[17] In a time of great trial He said, "Watch and pray."[18] Paul said, "Pray at all times in the Spirit with all prayer and supplication;"[19] and "Pray constantly."[20]

At a Presidential Prayer Breakfast in Washington, D.C. one of the clergymen opened his

Inter Varsity Photo

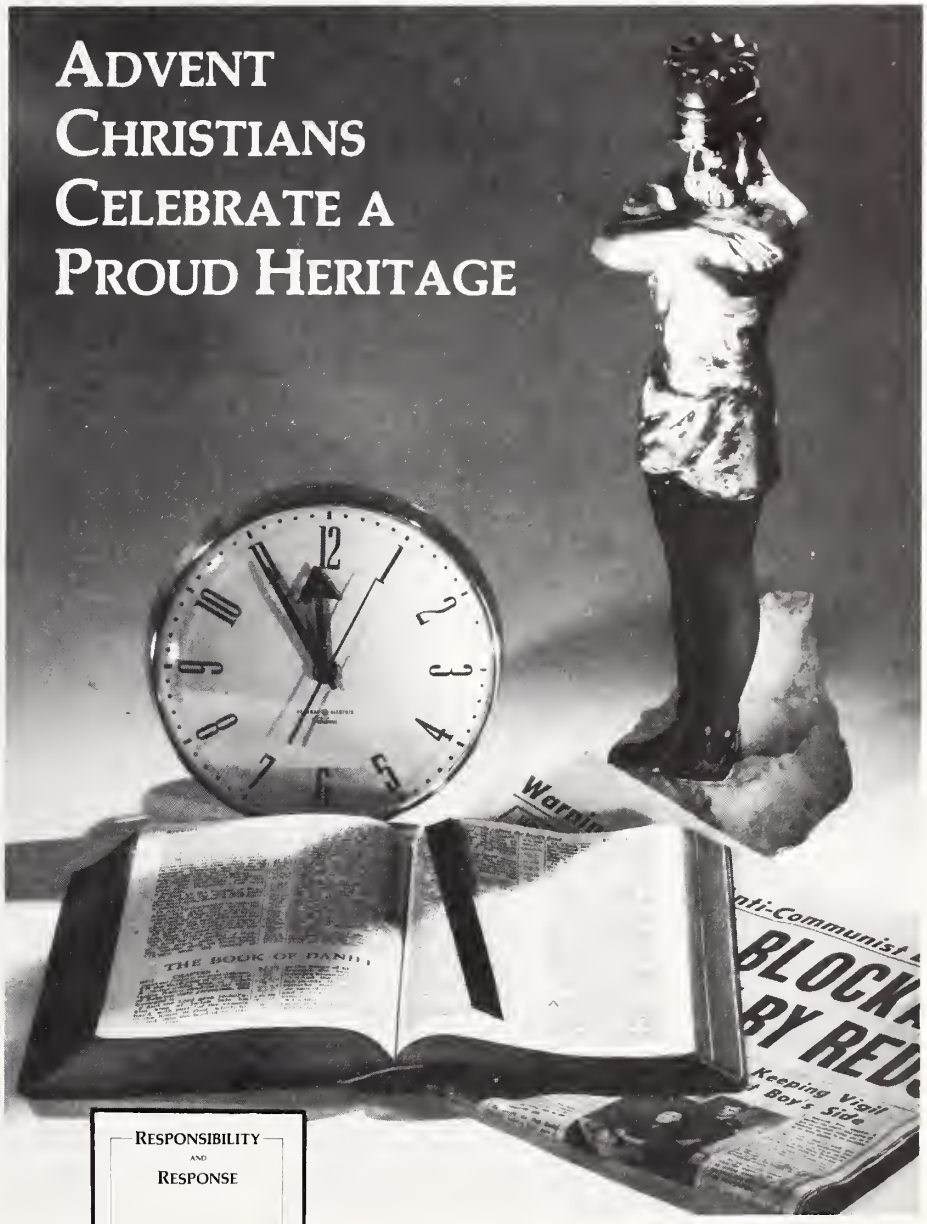
prayer with the words, "Lord God Almighty, Help us to pray." In spite of all the benefits of prayer, we still need the admonition to pray. Perhaps it's the work of prayer that hinders us. Perhaps it's knowing that true prayer will require our involvement in the answer. Whatever the reason, there's no substitute for prayer. No short cut.

When we obey the Lord's admonition to go into the "closet," shut the door, and pray, we will find that "your Father who sees in secret will reward you."[21] Prayer works! □

Notes

1. Matthew 6:6 (paraphrase of KJV)
2. Psalms 46:10 (see also Psalms 37:7)
3. Isaiah 40:31
4. Luke 22:42-44
5. Genesis 18
6. Genesis 32
7. Numbers 14
8. Psalms 51
9. 1 Kings 8
10. 1 Kings 19
11. Ezra 9
12. Mark 1:35
13. 1 Thessalonians 3:10
14. Acts 1:14
15. Acts 12:5
16. Acts 13:3
17. Luke 18:1
18. Mark 14:38
19. Ephesians 6:18
20. 1 Thessalonians 5:17
21. Mathew 6:6

Roger Schoenhals is a freelance writer living in Seattle, Washington.



You can read about it in *Responsibility and Response*, Volume Two of the Advent Christian History Series.

Please send _____ copies of *Responsibility and Response* at $9.95 plus $1.25 postage for each copy.

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Responsibility and Response
Venture Bookstore
P.O. Box 23152 • Charlotte, NC 28212

First Things First

Clayton Blackstone

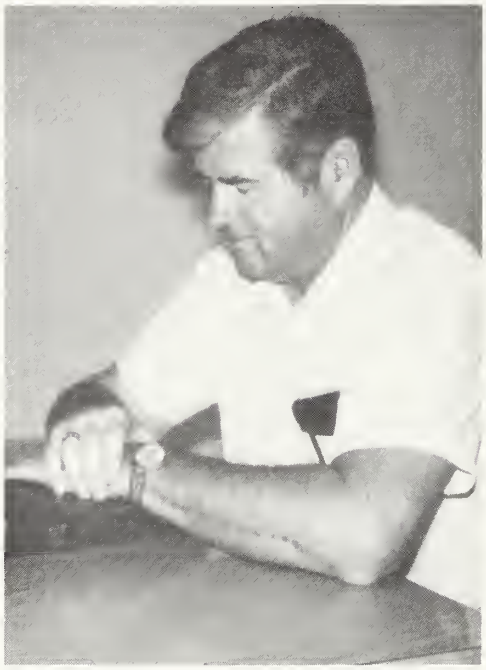
Rumor has it that pharmaceutical companies utilize fliers of the friendly skies to test blood pressure medications. While I'm a confirmed lover of air travel, I mus admit...their schedules seem, at times, to be mere numbers on a board which may or may not bear any resemblance to actual arrival and departure times.

I despise being late. (My personal dictionary contains the following definition: *Late*-anything less than fifteen minutes early!)

We occupied runway space in Atlanta, Georgia in June, 1984, when we were supposed to connect with another flight in New York City. Something about thunderstorms over Washington, D.C. or changes in traffic patterns in the Washington, D.C.—New York corridor. The reasons for the delay blew with time. Memories of a churning stomach, restless passengers, and angry asides still linger.

Frankly, I must admit to a large degree of impatience, even when the reasons for delay are understandable. When tired, late, and frustrated, I've been known to advocate all kinds of extreme measures. I assumed, in my earlier years, that any kind of activity is preferable to inactivity. (Major blunders have had a marvelous way of tempering zeal!)

Just suppose that the pilot had shared my impetuous tendencies.



He might have demanded that the tower approve take-off, citing the restlessness of the passengers as sufficient justification. Taking chances 35,000 feet up make for blemished safety records and dissatisfied customers. For a wise pilot, it's safety first...then take-off.

The barometer of "success"

To our loss, activity, these days, constitutes the standard for success.

Careers are built on sixteen hour days. A ride on the company fast track is purchased by one willing to sacrifice all for "the company." Churches build the kingdom of God better than everyone else by programming something for every day of the week, and all day on Sunday.

Maybe activity is not the barometer of success we've allowed it to become. We never intend for things to turn out this way. They just do, probably because of our failure to monitor priorities.

Before you plant your feet and brace yourself for a hard right coming from behind the pulpit, relax. Priorities are a problem for all of us...including preachers. None of us need a dousing in guilt. The condemnation ravages our spirits without an outsider adding fuel to the fire.

Everyone, it seems, wants a piece of us. Our spouse decides that seventeen minutes of in-depth communication each week isn't enough. (Block off an evening in the Day-Timer for that.)

The kids suffer from neglect. The attention we give them during dinner (the encouragement to inhale their food so we can fall asleep watching Dan Rather) lacks the quality of time we know we should be spending with them.

Our boss determines loyalty (and who gets the promotions) by whose car is still in the parking lot when he leaves at 9:00 p.m.

And, of course, there's the church. The "Deeply Spiritual Watchdog Society" judges us *uncommitted* if we miss a single gathering. And, how can anyone who loves the Lord turn down an invitation to be chairperson on the committee to determine the feasibility of adding an eighth day to the church week?

Activity needs perspective

Activity is important...it just needs some perspective.

Ezra illustrates the point forcefully. The pilgrims who found their way back to Jerusalem had a mission. The philosopher Hegel's words would have received a hearty "Amen" from this goal oriented group: "We may affirm that absolutely nothing great in the world has been accomplished without passion."

God called them to be a "kingdom of priests and a holy nation" (Exodus 19:6). Their reason for being was etched into their minds from infancy. And the Temple held the key to it all. For them, the Temple represented the presence of God.

Even though the passion to rebuild the Temple drove them, they chose to give a higher priority to something else. Take a close look...

When the seventh month came and the Israelites had settled in their towns, the people assembled as one man in Jerusalem. Then Jeshua son of Jozadak and his fellow priests and Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel and his associates began to build the altar of the God of Israel to sacrifice burnt offerings on it, in accordance with what is written in the law of Moses the man of God. Despite their fear of the people, around them, they built the altar on its foundation and sacrificed burnt offerings on it to the Lord, both the morning and evening sacrifices. Then in accordance with what is written, they celebrated the Feast of Tabernacles with the required number of burnt offerings prescribed for each day. After that, they presented the regular burnt offerings, the New Moon sacrifices and the sacrifices for all the appointed feasts of the Lord, as well as those brought as freewill offerings of the Lord. On the first day of the seventh month they began to offer burnt offerings to the Lord, though the foundation of the Lord's temple had not yet been laid (Ezra 3:1-6).

In our "put the pedal to the metal and take the corners on two wheels" world, their priority seems to deny reality. This zealous band of Jews opted for worship before work.

These visionaries built an altar to offer sacrifices and celebrated the Feast of Tabernacles...then they went to work.

Before nominating this crew to the Hall of Fame for the "Truly Spiritual," we'd better take a closer look at the text.

Things had not developed quite like their early idealism envisioned. They saw no yellow ribbons round the old fig tree. The natives had not received them with open arms and a ticker tape parade. Things were not going well, and getting worse.

They needed help. Circumstances drove them to worship. Most of us gain little enjoyment "under the gun." Yet before plotting the ways of escape from the pressure, there's something worth remembering. Nothing drives us to God quite as well as the urgency of a situation.

The text also reveals another nugget worth some contemplation. They "assembled as one man in Jerusalem."

Diversity or divergence?

Advent Christians have traditionally been rather proud of their diversity. Unfortunately, diversity easily becomes divergence and shared vision lost. Diversity is only a strength if a sense of a common purpose remains more important than the things that make us different.

The same things that make us different from each other, made one Jew different from another. They had varying amounts of money on deposit at First National Bank of Jerusalem. Their occupational skills differed. Some were introverts and some extroverts. But when they gathered in Jerusalem, the differences took a back seat to a common purpose...worship.

They laid the necessary foundation for their work by their worship. Then it was time to see a dream become reality. Look at Ezra 3:7-9.

Most of us dream well, but lose it here. It's a lot easier to dream than do. These people went to work. We can't be sure just how much was done since the Hebrew word used could cover the whole process of making the structure fit for us, but they began to make progress.

The Jewish people possessed a great sense of history. It was evident here. They made a serious attempt to parallel Solomon's actions during the original temple construction.

...Both began construction during the second month.

...Both bought material from Sidon and Tyre.

...Both sang the same song in celebration. Continued on next page

The mission was carefully conceived. Twenty-six months of preparation precede this moment. Material was diligently selected. Each detail anticipated.

Accountability insured the implementation of the original plans. Each worker knew he had to answer to a supervisor.

Time to celebrate

Following completion of phase one of the building program, a celebration was in order. Read Ezra 3:10-13.

A close look at the celebration brings into focus the first storm cloud on the horizon. In spite of careful attempts to duplicate Solomon's process, differences remained that could not be ignored.

...The ark of the covenant had been lost or destroyed.

...The visible glory of God was nowhere to be seen.

...Small beginnings were a poor substitute for the former glory of Solomon's ornate temple.

Some took great pride in their accomplishments and praised God. Their worship was an affirmation of faith. A great deal of work remained. But God had been good so they took time out to celebrate.

Others expressed disappointment. The contrast in response reveals the potential for trouble. A generation before, the original temple dominated the Jerusalem skyline. The new building stood incomplete. Its lines unimposing. Ornate trimmings yielded to simplicity due to budget considerations. The new temple would be nice but nothing compared to what used to be...so they cried. It must have been an interesting choral effect — shouts of joy mingled with moans of disappointment.

Zechariah encountered the same emotions a few years later and confronted the issue head on.

He reminded the Jews that the first temple paid tribute to Solomon's wealth and vision. The new structure would rise not by might or power, but by the energy and encouragement of God's spirit.

There was inherent danger in judging success with the measuring stick of size. "No one should despise small things," Zechariah chided them.

Three principles

Three maxims relevant to vision emerge from our journey through the text.

1. *Nothing establishes a vision better than a vibrant relationship with God:* Jeremiah gave us God's perspective:

"Let not the wise man boast in his wisdom or the strong man boast in his strength or the rich man boast in his riches, but let him who boasts boast about this: that he knows and understands me..." (Jeremiah 9:23,24).

New beginnings are never effortless. Perhaps you are recovering from moral failure...struggling to stifle the nicotine urge...stretching your short fuse...withdrawing from Twinkies. No simple solutions exist.

Some may be blest with great self-discipline. Most of us in the trenches, however, do daily hand-to-hand combat to avoid being taken as a prisoner of war.

Great visions demand hard work. But before we lose ourselves in the details of duty, let's get the relationship with God on track. It remains the most important aspect of the job at hand.

New beginnings often end up as repeat performances of "The Same Old Story" because we forget that a relationship with the living God has priority over activity.

2. *Always sweat the details.* Allow me to defend myself before you remind me that such counsel is what ulcers are made of. Spirituality is not synonymous with loss of sleep, worry lines, and burnout. To avoid such confusion we condone (and perhaps even encourage) mediocrity.

Our world cries for excellence. "Committed to excellence" is fast becoming the catch phrase of the '80s. Since Jesus is our perfect example and we are his disciples, a Christian should be *prima inter pares* (first among his peers) in the quest.

Frito-Lay boasts that there is a 99.5% chance that whether you own a Mom and Pop store in Missoula, Montana, or the flagship Safeway store in Oakland, California, you will get a call from its Frito route salesman every day. God's Good News demands as much from its representatives as does the product whose best line is "Bet you can't eat just one!"

We cannot do everything. Other denominations manage larger budgets, employ more headquarters personnel, and enjoy greater name recognition. But none should have a greater commitment to quality.

Let's not confuse excellence with flair either. The visionary Jews knew they could not duplicate Solomon's temple...they did the best they could with what they had, without apology.

3. *There is always someone waiting to rain on your parade.* Some people will always remind you that they have seen a better

building, observed a better program, or heard better preaching.

In the "good old days" people were more committed...churches more deeply spiritual...sacrificial giving the norm instead of the exception...pastors better preachers...missions a greater burden.

These "loud cries" may or may not be true. This is: We are powerless to turn back the clock.

The greatness our denomination possessed is as unimportant as how the first temple looked. We, like the Jewish visionaries, need to tackle today's tasks with the resources we have in the culture we are a part of.

"Rise up, O men of God!
Have done with lesser things;
Give heart, and soul, and mind and strength
To serve the King of Kings.

"Rise up O men of God!
The church for you doth wait,
Her strength unequal to the task;
Rise up and make her great!"

—Wm. P. Merrill

A graduate of Berkshire Christian College, Clayton Blackstone pastors the Church of New Hope (Advent Christian).

Are We Capable of Dreaming?

It seems as though I've known forever that I wanted to be a pastor. Aside from a couple of flirtations with other possibilities, the pursuit of my childhood ambition drives me still.

Although my goal remains unchanged, the intervening years have produced some valuable lessons I could never have understood as a fifth grader.

Things have not always turned out as planned. The disappointments have sometimes been so acute, I have questioned my call to the pastoral ministry. The disillusionment of failed expectations produces a frightening consequence...a tendency to retrench and cease dreaming.

Nearly two years ago, I began to realize that my personal pilgrimage was not a solo journey. I have listened to other pastors, to people whose marriages were shattered, and to men who stood at mid-life candidly admitting that life-long aspirations could never be realized. I have even observed its effect on churches, institutions, and denominations.

As these thoughts were swirling around in my mind, I was reading the book of Ezra during my devotional time. The applications could not be avoided. "The Birth, Care, and Feeding of a Vision" came to life.

As I write, the sky is gray and a damp chill makes feeling warm difficult. The day serves as a parable to life in the '80s. More of us than we'd care to admit live in the gray twilight. The glowing expectations of youth are only a dim memory. And what's worse...we have no desire to dream again because the possibility of more disappointment makes the risk too great.

An old proverb reminds us that "if it were not for hope the heart would break." People need dreams. Churches require a sense of the future. Denominations must possess a vision for tomorrow. The alternative...life in the gray twilight zone.

"An old Hasidic tale tells of a man named Bontscha. He was called Bontscha the silent because he had never known anything but blows, loss, pain, and failure, and had never complained or expected anything better. When he died, he appeared before the heavenly tribunal. 'There in that other world, no one understood you. You never understood yourself. You never understood that you need not have been silent, that you could have cried out, and that your outcries would have brought down the world itself.'

"The Judge then offered him a reward: absolutely anything he wanted. All he had to do was ask. Bontscha opened his mouth for the first time to reveal his deepest desire...and told the Judge he would like "every morning for breakfast, a hot roll with fresh butter." Heaven was ashamed and wept.

"Bontscha's greatest impoverishment was that he had been rendered incapable of dreaming for anything worthwhile."[1]

As the fog settles in and I reach for another log for the fire, I'm praying that the Lord of history will use the timeless truths of Ezra to reignite your passion for the future. □

—*Clayton Blackstone*

[1]Ben Patterson, "Why the Sermon," *Leadership*, Terry Muck, ed., Summer, 1984, Vol. 5, No. 3, p. 120.

The Setting Free of the Sun and Stars

A former missionary's daughter, who was born in the Philippines, recently received a personal letter from Philippines President Corazon Aquino.

Annie Teshera, a student at Berkshire Christian College, after watching the TV presentation of Mrs. Aquino's inauguration, wrote a poem expressing her own feelings.

Unbeknown to Annie, the letter found its way into the hands of President Aquino by an interesting chain of events, involving her brother, Kris, and a family acquaintance, Ambassador Emanuel Palaez. Following the poem is a personal letter to Annie Teshera from Corazon Aquino.

"Land of the morning,"
"Land dear and holy,"
This is your child returning —
Returning to joy in your glory.
I behold the radiance of your hills and sea,
Your banner with its sun and stars,
Your people who are so dear to me.
I loathe the one who tars
the victories from past wars.
I loathe the tyrant's might
that has dimmed your shining shores.
Your sun and stars no longer shine bright
without burning liberty's light.
For twenty years the tyrant raged,
squelching any of your rising fight.
For twenty years your people were caged
and their faces became lined and aged.
One day, out of the opposition,
Rose a lady who staged
the beginnings of an overdue revolution.
She fought long and hard for Philippine
Emanicipation.
Into the footsteps of Rizal did she follow,
strong with national love and determination.
She flung high the banner of Bonifacio
and made proud General Romulo.
"Beautiful land of love," "...Thee do our souls
adore."
Now, the glorious liberty your banner will flow,
The shining sun and stars flow freely
over your sacred shore.
And now the rumble in your streets
turn into a roar,
"Cory!" — "Cory!" — "Cory!"

—Annie Teshera

October 9, 1986

Ms. Annie Teshera
17725 44th West
Lynnwood, WA 98036
U.S.A.

Dear Ms. Teshera,

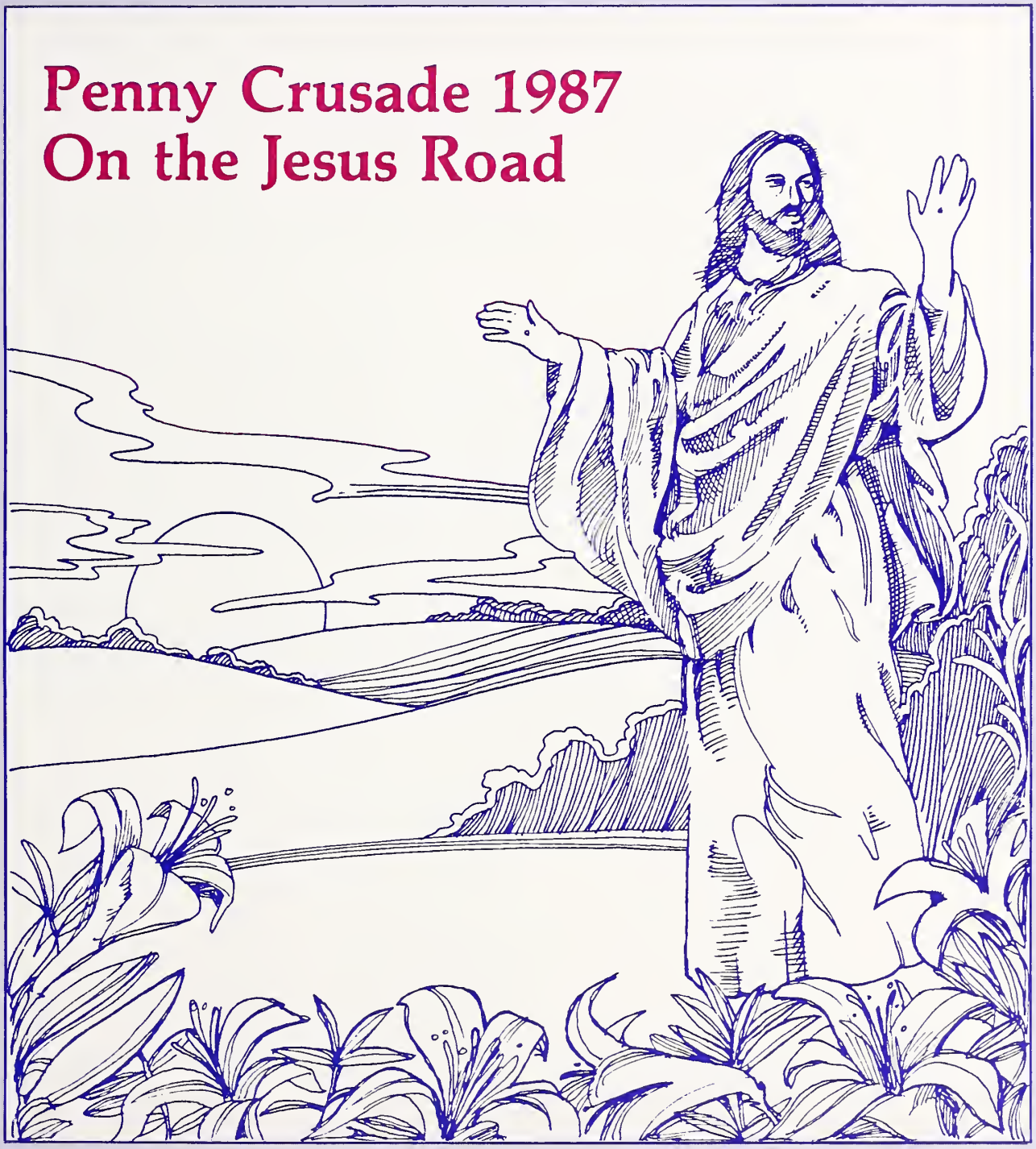
Thank you for your poem. It is indeed gratifying to know that the popular support we have received from our people extends beyond the boundaries of our islands. This underlining call inspires us to perform our duties unselfishly and with dedication.

Please accept our appreciation for your thoughtful gesture, and our best wishes for your good health and success. We look forward to your continued support as we strive to establish a strong democracy and a healthy economy for our people.

All the best,

Corazon C. Aquino

Penny Crusade 1987
On the Jesus Road



Let Us All Give, That Others Might Hear and Be Saved

"Who has despised the day of small things?" said Zechariah many years ago. "Not us!" most Advent Christians could say, who saw a small idea for a simple way of raising money for missions some twenty five years ago, grow to a program today that provides a substantial portion of our mission support. Advent Christians through their faithfulness in giving, have again broken both our previous record for giving and last year's goal of $250,000.

I want to challenge you to believe with me that God will help us break a new goal of $275,000 for 1987. Through the years certain important keys have shown up to explain the success of our Penny Crusade. I would like to review them with you.

Key #1 — Emphasis upon missions. The Holy Spirit puts in the heart of every believer a desire to share his or her faith and to see salvation of people at home and around the world. We have an inner desire to want to give if we cannot go, in order that others might hear and have the opportunity to live eternally.

Key #2 — The idea that everyone can share in mission giving from the boys and girls bringing their pennies, to their moms and dads bringing their dollars and generous checks, to small churches giving what they can, to large churches giving a great deal. It is a matter of sharing together to spread the Word with everybody having a part. If your church was not involved in Penny Crusade last year, I challenge you to become part of it for this year, and I ask the churches who have participated this past year to raise their goals by a minimum of 5% in order for us to break this year's goal.

Key #3 — The excitement that Penny Crusade brings to a church. Missionary giving need not be just duty, but it can be fun! Many churches have contests between men and women, contests between Sunday school classes, socials, walk-a-thons, rock-a-thons, street fairs, suppers, plays, work days, and a host of other activities to raise money for our Penny Crusade. The more people involved, the more exciting and profitable it becomes. The things that can be done to raise money for Penny Crusade are as limitless as your imagination! Why not try to do something sensational and different this year!

Key #4 — The importance of goal setting and planning. Plan now to do exciting things in your Penny Crusade and be definite about what you want to raise as a goal. People like to break goals! Prayerfully join with us to give that others might hear and be saved.

Yours for World Evangelism,

Harold L. Patterson

Harold L. Patterson, Director
Department of World Missions

Join Us In Another Record Breaking Penny Crusade!

1986 Penny Crusade Report

$5,000.00 and over	
North Park Community, San Diego, CA	8,360.00
Blake's Chapel, Hampstead, NC	5,700.00
Oak Hill Bible Church, Oxford, MA	5,130.84
Aurora, IL	5,122.25
Bixler Memorial, Dowling Park, FL	5,000.00
Clendenin, WV	5,000.00
$3,000.00 and over	
Portsmouth, NH	4,701.10
Lowery Park Community, Tampa, FL	3,442.79
Kennebunk, ME	3,159.98
Portland, Milwaukie, OR	3,100.00
Hope Community, Chicago, IL	3,010.65
$2,000.00 and over	
Elmore Memorial, Charleston, SC	2,875.00
Torrington, CT	2,846.48
Seattle, WA	2,692.21
Bangor, ME	2,576.34
Shiloh, Monroe, NC	2,553.95
West Head Nova Scotia	2,276.04
Berea, Smoaks, SC	2,189.48
LaGrange, IL	2,182.16
First, Santa Cruz, CA	2,136.70
Bethel, Manchester, NH	2,115.00
Goodwin Mills, Biddeford, ME	2,100.00
Friendship, ME	2,100.00
Garner, NC	2,083.80
DeKalb, IL	2,060.32
Attleboro, MA	2,080.42
United, Wilmington, NC	2,000.00
$1,000 and over	
Ashland, ME	1,903.00
Lakeview, Sylvester, MI	1,876.98
Princeton, WV	1,846.32
Minton's Chapel, Kite, GA (SS)	1,832.78
Bellingham, WA	1,780.75
Vernon, VT	1,767.00
Blessed Hope, Springfield, MA	1,765.30
Watertown, WI	1,765.00
Stone's Creek, Benson, NC	1,747.89
Village, Carpentersville, IL	1,731.17
Tabernacle, Lenoir, NC	1,712.89
Hollandale, Spring Lake, NC	1,698.13
North Scituate, RI	1,681.96
Blessed Hope, Centerline, MI (SS)	1,678.72
McAlpin, FL	1,669.02
Loudon Ridge, Concord, NH	1,630.00
First, Charleston, WV	1,625.43
Magnolia, Evansville, WI	1,620.00
First, Lenoir, NC	1,607.00
Lone Star, Clifton Forge, VA	1,576.39
First, Hickory, NC	1,568.71
State Road, Mapleton, ME	1,553.88
Fellowship, Taylorsville, NC	1,551.30
Bear River, Nova Scotia (SS)	1,517.47
Central, Lenoir, NC	1,500.00
Faith Evangelical, Melrose, MA	1,500.00
Tustin, CA	1,500.00
AC Conference of So. California	1,487.85
Alton Bay, NH	1,475.00
Bristol, CT (SS)	1,435.54
Auburn, ME	1,423.24
Newhall, WV	1,403.65
Bonita Ave., LaVerne, CA	1,400.00
First, Concord, NC	1,400.00
Rockbridge, OH	1,400.00
First, Lake City, FL	1,379.79
Prophetstown, IL	1,378.19
West Chapman, Mapleton, ME (SS)	1,366.20
Pleasant Hill, Southlake, TX	1,352.64
Faith, Plainville, CT	1,344.63
Bear Point, Nova Scotia	1,325.80
Fall River, MA	1,300.00
Pleasant Hill, Linden, NC	1,299.71
Blue Creek, Elkview, WV	1,290.50
North Springfield, VT	1,290.50
Hope Community, Lynnwood, WA	1,279.69
Hickory Grove, Four Oaks, NC (SS)	1,274.33
Faith Community, Windsor, CT	1,254.28
Sumas, WA	1,253.02
Medford, OR	1,251.00
Middle Simonds, Hartland, Canada	1,249.34
Friendship, Jacksonville, FL	1,241.92
Brays, Iberia, MO	1,239.61
Elk Valley, Big Chimney, WV	1,227.01
Westfield, MA (SS)	1,217.84
New Albany, IN (SS)	1,187.05
W. Jacksonville, FL	1,176.98
Dunntown, Washburn, ME (SS)	1,165.78
Galesburg, IL (SS)	1,155.00
Hope Evangelical Comm., N. Dartmouth, MA	1,153.49
Savannah, Bishopville, SC	1,147.10
Dover, NH	1,123.20
Beals, ME (SS)	1,118.00
West Bay, Panama City, FL	1,113.23
New Hope, Whitefield, NH	1,113.15
Adria, N. Tazewell, VA	1,106.91
Massena, NY	1,102.34
First, Augusta, GA (SS)	1,100.45
Riverside, Ft. Worth, TX	1,081.74
Valley, Arleta, CA (SS)	1,065.86
Nooksack, WA	1,060.38
Cooper's Creek, Charleston, WV	1,053.30
Chillum Community, Chillum, MD	1,048.73
Stratford, CT (SS)	1,044.84
Erwin, NC	1,044.82
Potter's Hill, Pink Hill, NC (SS)	1,038.57
West Wareham, MA	1,026.72
Portland, ME	1,012.30
Clovis, NM	1,010.00
Charleston, SC (SS)	1,000.00
Hartsville, SC	1,000.00
Waynesboro, VA	1,000.00
$500.00 and over	
Colton, OR (SS)	991.99
Walnut Park, Gadsden, AL	990.29
Richmond, Mechanicsville, VA	953.38
Dulin's Grove, Charlotte, NC	940.20
Bristow, OK	915.06
Clear Fork, WV	885.37
Buckhead, Smoaks, SC	871.93
Neighborhood, Lewiston, ID	856.62
Beaver Creek, Ferguson, NC	851.10
Center Haverhill, N. Haverhill, NH (SS)	850.00
Oxford, South Paris, ME	843.27
Creston, Seville, OH	838.39
New Hope, Waycross, GA	815.00
Danville, Quebec	807.75
Sunshine, Deer Isle, ME	800.76
Mt. Moriah, Henryville, IN	800.00
East Buffalo, Tampa, FL	793.00
Parkside Community, San Francisco, CA	772.61
Millville, Panama City, FL (SS	755.65
Fayetteville, NC	755.00
Morganton, NC	753.00
Lee's Chapel, Four Oaks, NC	752.00
Farmington, NH	750.03
Elkton, MD (SS)	745.06
Crouseville, ME	733.10
Chetek, WI	721.50
Brunswick, GA	713.12
Pittsfield, NH	704.74
Nazareth, Lenoir, NC	660.00
East Norwalk, CT	646.05
Morrisville, VT	645.03
LaValle, WI	642.11
Bridgton, ME	632.21
Columbus, OH	629.59

cont. on back page

1987 Penny Crusade Goal

$275,000.00

1986 Penny Crusade Report

Calvary, Lenoir, NC	622.10
Long's Grove, Monroe, NC	610.00
Stone Mountain, GA	601.69
Bethel, Lenoir, NC	600.00
Littleton, NH	575.00
Blessed Hope, Glen St. Mary, FL	572.13
Pembroke, GA	570.32
Dover, FL	550.00
Northwood Narrows, NH	543.11
First, Gadsden, AL	540.55
Pasadena, CA WHFMS	521.41
Minturn, Swan's Island, ME	518.00
Chelsea, Gardiner, ME	516.48
Ballwin Community, Ballwin, MI	509.00
Beachville, O'Brien, FL	500.00
Blessed Hope, Waterville, ME	500.00
First, Wilmington, NC	500.00
Hickory Grove, Saluda, SC	500.00
West Ossipee, Center Ossipee, NH	500.00
Concord, NH	489.07

$300.00 and over

Ridgeland, SC (SS)	478.85
Holly Grove, Benson, NC	477.40
Carr, FL	450.20
Margaretville, NY	449.79
Clovis, CA	438.83
First, Gainesville, FL	434.32
Claiborne, Richwood, OH	432.68
Ottervale, Ivydale, WV (SS)	427.00
Southside Community, Jacksonville, FL	426.70
Council Valley, Yale, OK	401.85
First, Jasper, FL (SS)	400.00
Haverhill, MA	388.09
Newport Center, VT (SS)	387.37
Salem, Mt. Olive, NC	383.81
Wallingford, CT	381.17
Columbia, SC	376.00
Mendota, IL	350.00
Stantontown, Marengo, OH	350.00
Wilson's Mill, NC	347.35
Villisca, Iowa	344.00
South Eliot, Eliot, ME	327.97
Stevenson, AL	326.65
Unity Gospel Tabernacle, Nebo, WV	325.00
Alley's Bay, Beals, ME	320.00
Hopewell, Cedar Bluff, AL	319.00
Mt. Pleasant, Clayton, NC	316.98
Eau Gallie (First) Melbourne, FL	315.92
Chattanooga, TN	300.00
Elbert, WV	300.00
Hope, Savannah, GA	300.00
Sparta, OH	300.00
Swainsboro, GA	300.00

$200.00 and over

East War, War, WV	278.50
Windham, ME WHFMS	277.00
Castle Hill, ME	270.23
Ephesus, Branford, FL	262.12
Lake Manor Chapel, Chatsworth, CA	258.00
Port Clyde, ME	255.00
Barbourville, KY	250.00
Dover-Foxcroft, ME	250.00
Little Brick, Lexington, VA	247.26
Wayside, Charlton City, MA	240.00
Memphis, TN	237.25
Trinity, Jacksonville, FL	217.87
Hickory Grove, Mt. Ayr, Iowa	217.82
Emmanuel, Rochester, NH	217.33
New Life Community, Baraboo, WI	214.16
Liberty, Procious, WV	213.60
Lake Region Christian Fellowship Harrison, ME	210.41
First, Charlotte, NC	209.64
White Oak, Artie, WV	209.00
Hamilton Chapel, Bolar, VA	207.69
O'Brion, Duck, WV	204.00
Berea, Collettsville, NC	200.00
Boone, NC	200.00
Clayton, NC	200.00
Lafayette, RI	200.00
Mt. Zion, Quaker City, OH	200.00
Unity, Four Oaks, NC	200.00
Mechanic Falls, ME WHFMS	200.00

Less than $200.00

Shamrock, TX	196.18
Hay's Fork, Looneyville, WV	194.98
Oak Grove, Millboro, VA	190.98
First, Dunbar, WV	181.75
Central, Clifton Forge, VA	179.43
Boomer, NC	178.31
Castle Hayne, NC	175.00
Community, Roanoke, VA	169.26
Victory Chapel, Mustoe, VA	166.19
Myrtle Grove, Wilmington, NC	165.22
Beebe, Quebec	152.12
Smithfield, NC	146.00
Beaverdam, VA	135.64
Raybon, Nahunta, GA	135.37
Dos Palos, CA	125.34
Newport, VT	125.00
Week Mills, ME (SS)	125.00
Four Corners, Seabrook, NH	124.20
Harrington, ME (SS)	120.95
Middle Sound, Wilmington, NC	119.19
Holton's Chapel, Soperton, GA	115.50
Otto, Spencer, WV	110.00
Perrin, TX	110.00
Piney Grove, Delco, NC	107.89
Birmingham, AL	100.00
Crossroads, Cedar Bluff, VA	100.00
Los Angeles, CA	100.00
Squire, WV	100.00
Union View, Lexington, VA	100.00
Vidalia, GA	91.00
Guiding Star, Letart, WV	86.00
Gastonia Mission, Gastonia, NC	80.24
Mikesville, Lake City, FL	75.00
Calvary, Somerville, MA	73.55
Lulu, FL	72.40
Chelsea, ME WHFMS	70.00
Barbour's Chapel, Four Oaks, NC	59.50
Lakeland, FL	57.72
St. Petersburg, FL	55.50
Dorcas Friendship Circle, Spencer, WV	52.00
Iron Hill, Dearing, GA	50.00
Middle Creek, Cedar Bluff, VA	50.00
Liberty, Farmville, NC	40.00
Faith Community, Hampton, NH	39.28
Newport, NH	30.75
Pax, WV	25.00
Schenectady, NY	23.52
Sandtown, Ontario (SS)	17.60

Individuals

Mr. Richard Barden; N. Scituate, RI	1,000.00
Mr. Mike Barbour; Four Oaks, NC	50.00
Mrs. Bertha Blanchard; Waterbury, VT	32.00
Mr. & Mrs. Dewey Johnson; Minneapolis, MN	20.00
Mr. & Mrs. Max Johnson; Bellingham, WA	50.00
Georgia Marcley; Schenectady, NY	50.00
Mrs. Rupert Noyes; Newburyport, MA	5.00
Miss Vera Randall; Seabrook, NH	5.00
Mrs. Alice Aulis; El Centro, CA	10.00

Norval S. Richardson

I Must Decide For Life

Ralph E. Dodge

Although chronologically late to be classified, Rev. Norval S. Richardson was truly a pioneer as he began his ministry in the middle of the third decade of this century. Traveling on horseback, motorcylces, model T Fords, trains, or just hitch-hiking, he made his way from one midwestern Advent Christian church to another in short term ministries.

He was faithful in visiting the isolated rural families even though the depression kept them from paying the agreed upon salary of fifty dollars a month or less. At times, as a bachelor, he took his stipend in board and room and was glad to get it.

A lesser dedicated person would have quit the ministry long before the end of those difficult first ten years but Norval Richardson had put his hand to the plough and would not be denied the harvest for his Lord.

His call to the ministry was impressive. The son of an Advent Christian pastor, Norval had toyed with the idea of following in his father's footsteps but it was only what he calls a "nebulous thing." But let him tell the story in his own words:

"I must decide for life"

"As a boy of about twelve years of age there came a consciousness of a call to the Christian ministry but by the time I had reached the age of fifteen I had changed my mind. I had learned to smoke cigarettes, on the sly of course, and I was finding pleasure in things that would not harmonize with good Christian conduct. So I gave up the idea of going into the ministry."

"In July 1922 my parents, my younger brother and I attended the camp meeting at Santa Cruz, California. It was during the course of that meeting that the great change came. One evening a heavy burden came upon me during the evangelistic service.

"The issue was clear. It was a matter of yielding all things to God's will and giving myself to the ministry. I must decide for life. But during the service I could not bring myself to yield to that unmistakable call to the Christian ministry. The service finally closed and a miserable sixteen-year-old boy went to his tent. But I did not sleep!"

"Finally I rose and dressed and walked down to the beach. There on the sand I prayed. With the waves rolling, the tide came in and then went out. I was groping in the darkness for Him. I could not yield. Still I prayed."

"The sun was just coming over the eastern horizon when my decision was finally reached. I said in my heart, 'Lord, I yield myself to Thee.' At that instant there came an indescribable peace and joy in my heart. The burden rolled away. It was a different sixteen-year-old boy that went to his tent at sunrise on that July morning in 1922."

The anchor still holds

That evening Norval Richardson gave a public testimony of what had transpired during the preceding twenty-four hours. He readily admits that it was that encounter with God and reality that served as an anchor during those early difficult years of his ministry. As I have heard this octogenarian teach and preach I am fully aware that the anchor still holds.

As we chatted in his second floor Carter House apartment overlooking the Suwannee River as it bends around the Advent Christian Village of Dowling Park, Florida, Rev. Richardson told me the interesting story of his remarkable life as a Christian minister.

Early years

Norval Sweet Richardson came to gladden the parsonage home of Rev. & Mrs. Frank Richardson on August 7th, 1906. He was born in Sugar Hill, New Hampshire, where his parents were serving the Advent Christian Church of that White Mountain community. The family moved to Tustin, California when Norval was only a small boy.

The family moved to Santa Rosa when Norval was in his sophomore year of high school. The school building had burned shortly prior to their arrival and classes were being held in various buildings around town. The confusion was too much for the sensitive sixteen-year-old Norval who decided to join his older brother who had just gone to Aurora, Illinois, to work in the post office and attend Aurora College. In the fall of 1922 Norval entered the Aurora Academy to complete his high school education.

Returning to California for his summer vacation, Norval, now seventeen, had an opportunity to preach his first sermon. He later recorded that initial experience by stating: "I began in the book of Genesis, completed an outline of God's whole program of salvation, and ended with the close of the book of Revelation—all in ten-minutes." This was the beginning of a long and fruitful ministry.

After spending the summer in California, Norval returned to Aurora and was graduated from the Academy in the spring of 1924.

Pastoral ministry

During the summer months following his first year at the college he accepted a call to preach at the Advent Christian Church in Miflin, Wisconsin. After a hazardous motorcycle trip in the rain and through muddy roads he arrived, hungry, muddy, and unshaven, just in time to preach the Sunday sermon. That was the first of two interim ministries that took him from Miflin to Burr Oak, Iowa, where he had a brief but highly satisfying ministry awaiting for the arrival of his father to pastor the church on a more permanent basis.

Norval found the work of the ministry highly gratifying in spite of the hardships he endured during those depression years. After the brief pastorate in Miflin he wrote, "One of the priceless boons of the Christian ministry is the privilege of knowing and having fellowship with the best people on earth." After the three month interim pastorate in Burr Oak, Iowa he wrote, "It was not easy to break away from the people I had learned to love. But by this time I knew that I would find friends in the next field of labor who would prove as true as the ones which were left." In that spirit the young Rev. Richardson left for his first full-time pastorate in LaValle, Wisconsin.

During the very successful pastorate, especially with work among the elderly, Rev. Richardson married Miss Irene Lloyd of Arena, Wisconsin. They first met at Aurora College and later attended various church functions together. The ceremony in the Lloyd family home was conducted by the

groom's father assisted by the bride's pastor.

Mrs. Irene Richardson has been an exemplar pastor's wife, never pushing herself to the front but always ready to serve in the Sunday school and in the women's work. She accepted the many moves and other hardships of the pastorate as a part of her Christian and marital responsibility.

Her congenial spirit and leadership ability were recognized even after retirement in Dowling Park where she served a term as president of the Residents' Council and another as president of the Woman's Home and Foreign Mission Society.

Further study and ministry

The next pastorate in South Bend, Indiana, was not so successful for the congregation was dominated by members of the Ku Klux Klan. When the young pastor would not join them in their nefarious activity they cut off his salary forcing the family to return to Wisconsin to live with their maternal in-laws until a new pastorate could be found. Those were difficult months but soon came a call from a circuit in Ohio offering a salary of $800 a year.

Following the Ohio pastorate there were two in California: Santa Clara and Santa Cruz. While at the former there was an opportunity to attend classes at the San Francisco Theological Seminary.

Next came the call from New Albany, Indiana. That was a fruitful four-year pastorate followed by one of equal duration in Lynn, Massachusetts. This latter one was different as it was a city church and the previous ones had been in rural situations. However, the adjustments were made for fruitful ministry that also gave the pastor an opportunity to continue his studies at the New England School of Theology. In all the previous pastorates, studies had been carried on through correspondence and with the use of tapes.

A widowed mother needed some care so the Norval Richardsons returned to LaVerne, California, for a five-year pastorate and more studies in the nearby LaVerne College.

To Nooksack and headquarters

In 1952 the church in Nooksack, Washington needed a strong pastor. Rev. Richardson was picked for what proved to be a very effective ministry of thirteen years during which the church was rebuilt and many people were added to the membership.

From this successful ministry, Rev. Richardson was invited to the denominational headquarters located in Aurora, Illinois to serve as Director of Stewardship and Tithing for the entire Advent Christian Church. In that capacity he traveled widely throughout the denomination and participated in the transfer of the headquarters to Charlotte, North Carolina.

In 1972 Rev. Richardson resigned his national office and became the executive of the South Georgia — Florida Conference, working from his retirement home in Dowling Park, Florida. As Executive Secretary he preached in many of the Advent Christian churches and helped place pastors throughout the two state area.

Upon his retirement, Rev. Richardson was given a beautiful plaque with the following inscription: *The South Georgia and Florida Conference honors Rev. Norval Richardson for his faithful and dedicated service to our Lord's work and to the ministry of the gospel. As he labored for God's people, he reaped the love and appreciation of many. 1972-1977.*

Norval Richardson is not the type of person to stop work even though officially retired. In addition to helping care for an ailing wife who is now in the Health Center, he participates in many community activities. For seven years Norval taught a large Sunday school class in the Bixler Memorial Advent Christian Church of Dowling Park. Recently retired from that teaching post with another plaque of appreciation, he now shares with other residents in leading the midweek prayer service.

Rev. & Mrs. Richardson have three children: a daughter and son who live in California. A second son is past President of Berkshire Christian College in Lenox, Massachusetts.

Rev. Norval Richardson is highly respected and deeply loved by those favored to know him. His friendship is so meaningful and his ministry has been so rich because of his love for people. Truly he was chosen of God to serve his generation. □

Rev. Ralph Dodge, a retired United Methodist Bishcp, lives at the Advent Christian Village. His writing credits include The Revolutionary Bishop Who Saw God at Work in Africa, *published by William Carey Press.*

How God has used Penny Crusade in one church

Penny Crusade: Showers of Blessing!

E. A. "Buddy" Dowd

In describing the depression of 1929, I heard my Mom say, you had to be there to experience first hand what took place. The same perhaps could be said concerning Penny Crusade the last several years at Blake's Chapel Advent Christian Church, located in Hampstead, North Carolina. For three months each year, Missions, Penny Crusade, contest, or similar adjectives are the words most often heard among the people here. Not that the other activities of the church are forgotten. No, in fact the other activities seem to take on a new air of excitement.

Zeal for reaching the lost

If someone had told this congregation of approximately 100 members several years ago that they could raise thousands of dollars each year for missions instead of hundreds, many would have doubted. What caused the change to come about? The change came as members found a new zeal and love for reaching the lost and became excited over seeing how much they, along with the help of the Lord, could raise for missions.

Now, of course, this did not come about without a great deal of planning, much prayer, and many hours of hard work. One of the things that has helped the most here is that all of the members have become collectively and individually involved.

The ladies for the last couple of years have raised thousands of dollars by making and selling homemade Easter eggs, taking part in a local spring festival, the making of quilts, and bake and yard sales. These activities are time consuming, for example the making of peanut butter and coconut eggs require that the ladies work every day the month before Easter, molding each egg into shape. The week before Easter the ladies work on dipping them in chocolate and personalizing and wrapping them. This project has grown the last three years from about 400 eggs to over 1,000. The making of a quilt, of course, is hard work, especially for the pastor's wife and a couple of others who haven't been raised with this art. However, the fellowship is wonderful and the ladies use this time to discuss future fund-

A barbeque and fish supper at Blake's Chapel Advent Christian Church in Hampstead, North Carolina. This is one of the many events Blake's Chapel sponsors to raise Penny Crusade money for Advent Christian missions.

raising events and ways to outdo the men.

The men, not to be outdone, have had barbeque and fish suppers. The barbeque supper required some of the men to get up at the wee hours of the morning and working until nine or ten at night for the success of this event.

The children do their part as they contribute their pennies, nickels, and dimes each Sunday. To help make Missions more exciting and interesting for the children and the young at heart, puppets have been used to present the program each Sunday. Buffy and Buster and their special friends, Miss Money-Bags and Mr. Nose-it-All have presented simple yet challenging dialogues in regards to our responsibility for supporting Missions through the local church.

Pastor E. A. "Buddy" Dowd with four baptized new believers.

God blesses the church

One area in which we did not count on in being blessed was the local church itself. Since this church has taken seriously their commitment to missions and come to believe that they can do great things for the cause of Christ by helping to send others to foreign lands, the Lord has opened up the windows of heaven and blessed us spiritually and financially beyond our wildest dreams.

In 1985, 17 new members were added to the church. 1986 brought 27 new members and the tithes and offerings are the largest in the history of the church. We were able to pay cash, $30,000, for the property adjacent to the church this September; something that would have been unheard of several years ago. The deacons are given a greater amount of funds to help meet the needs here at home, in fact, the entire church is more mission minded and opened to the needs of others.

Because of the continuous growth of the Crusade, people within the local community and some out of state friends have heard of Blake's Chapel's commitment to missions and have supported our efforts.

No secret formula

I wish I could give a "secret" formula for a successful crusade. There is none. But any church, no matter what the size, can do great things for the Lord if they are willing to put forth the time, and the effort. Do not ask yourselves, what is the least we can do for Missions, but ask, what is the best and then double that amount, believing that God will multiply the giving. Work as if everything depended upon your efforts, recognizing, of course, that it is only with the Lord's help and blessings that great things can be accomplished. There is no telling what would take place within the Advent Christian Church if all of our churches were to take seriously the Great Commission of taking the gospel to the ends of the world. □

Caroline Michael
Director

Candid Shots at Bristow TRP Seminar

In late October Caroline Michael, National Director of Women's Ministries, led a two-day seminar developing Trained Resource Persons with women from Iowa, Missouri, Oklahoma, Texas, New Mexico, and Memphis, Tennessee.

Small group developing workshop, How to Increase Membership — *Lorene Neal, Linda Fritchey, Carol Burford, Floy Meyers.*

Group preparing for presenting their workshop, Personal Evangelism: *June Huff, Merrill Stacy, Julie Winkles, Pat Brill*

Pleased with their finished product, Lyne Ssebikindu, Kathy Smith, Arlene Osborn, Carole Lewis, Doris Brown developed their workshop on How to Form Special Interest Groups.

Carol Burford waiting for group response while presenting a workshop her group had developed. Seated: Floy Meyers

Pooling ideas: Doris Brown, Carol Burford, Kathy Smith, Carole Lewis

Lyne Ssebikindu sharing her testimony with women at the TRP Seminar at Bristow, Oklahoma. Lyne, formerly from Uganda, is the pastor's wife at our Memphis, TN Advent Christian church.

Fifth TRP Seminar Announced

Princeton, WV will be the location for the fifth Trained Resource Person two-day seminar. Selected adies from the Appalachian Region will be meeting here April 9-11, 1987. Joan Cole, Appalachian Regional Director of Christian Education, will be assisting Caroline Michael, National Director of Women's Ministries in this event. Ladies from other regions who were not able to participate in the training event in their region are welcome. Please request information from the Department of Women's Ministries about registering for this seminar.

Appalachian Regional WHFMS

Two workshops were featured as an educational opportunity for the ladies at the beginning of the regional meeting. Sue Barnes of New Life Fellowship in Hickory discussed "Nutrition and the Christian Life." Angela Johnson, Piedmont Conference WHFMS president, led women to consider "Positive Attitudes." Director of World Missions Harold Patterson gave a glowing report from our mission fields. Special music was provided by Helen Estep, Connie Jones, and Palma Neal.

Their regional project will be giving support to the Capital Funds Drive for buildings in India and the Philippines. Nora Tiller of War, WV installed the officers: President Janet DuBois, Vice-president Betheleen Facemyer, Secretary Iris Easter, Treasurer Ruby Brookshire, and Auxiliary Superintendents: Elaine Preslar, Carol Chambers, and Nancy Okes.

Massachusetts Women Meet at Attleboro

President Nina McGinnes' opening devotions contrasted "Doing versus Being." Following a harvest supper hosted by the Attleboro WHFMS women, Loren and Helen Anderson, former missionaries in Guatamala, gave an encouraging and inspiring presentation with slides. Nancy Pritchard led the children's program.

Eastern Regional WHFMS President Barbara Schaeffner gave highlights of our missionary work. She is providing tapes of Marion Damon's furlough messages on request for $3 each, as well as tapes from the WHFMS Alton Bay Retreat, and Regional Convention.

The Conference officers include: President Nina McGinnes, Secretary and Auxiliary Superintendent Nancy Pritchard, and Treasurer Phyllis Nichols.

Margaret Helms to be Featured

Dates have been set for the Eastern Region WHFMS Convention which will be held at Alton Bay, NH May 28-29, 1987. Margaret Helms, missionary home on furlough from Cebu, Philippines, will be the guest missionary speaker. The Region is also planning their fall Women's Retreat for September 26-28, 1987 at Alton Bay Bible Conference Center.

Christmas is for Giving

Each of the twenty-two ladies of the **Brays, Missouri WHFMS** brought a man's or a woman's gift to take to the local nursing home for Christmas. They also prepared plates of goodies for the shut-ins. Officers for 1987 include President Grace Groves, Vice-president Lennie Thompson, Secretary Crethen Hinson, Treasurer Nova Dake, and Program Chairman Ruth Stump.

Mt. Olive Newsletter

WHFMS President Janet Jackson writes a monthly newsletter to the ladies in the Salem Advent Christian Church in Eastern North Carolina. She challenges her ladies with an inspirational thought, lists birthdays and anniversaries, and gives them a reminder of the happenings of the upcoming monthly meeting. Their December meeting was a progressive dinner with stops at five homes — an evening of fun and fellowship.

CONNIE JONES
902 Hemlock Dr. NE, Lenoir, NC 28645

Priceless Treasure

Connie Jones

Do you have a chicken feather, hatpin, or large silver button? The treasure hunt is on and a team of church youth eagerly seeks the desired treasure specified on the list. Treasure hunts can be fun and rewarding. Remember that red, juicy watermelon at the end of the treasure hunt at summer camp. Did anything ever taste so good? I'd like you to join me on a different treasure search. We'll find our treasure buried in the book of Proverbs. Valuable treasure is there for those who hunt.

How does a golden apple in a silver picture sound to you? Desirable? Proverbs 25:11 says, "A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver." Remember when someone came to you with just the message you needed to hear—that word of encouragement—that expression of gratitude—that assertion of love or sympathy? How it warms our hearts when someone takes time to empathize with us and give us that little look—that touch—that word spoken at the right time that says, "I know and I care." How long has it been since you've given that kind of treasure?

One Sunday I saw a young girl in our church go up to an elderly lady and give her a hug as she whispered, "I love you." The woman's face lighted up. On Wednesday night she said, "I'm still thinking about that hug; it was so kind and sweet." The church needs more of this type of expression.

Often in retrospect we recall a time when we failed to speak and a priceless moment was lost. "If only I'd said—if I had just told her—I wish I had given my verbal support." But the "fitting" time is past, and the opportunity is gone. Let's speak up when God nudges us and experience the treasure that is promised.

Not only is there treasure in speaking the right word at the right time, there is also treasure in hearing certain words in the correct way. Proverbs 25:12, "Like an earring of gold...is a wise man's rebuke to a listening ear." How do you respond when someone criticizes you? It's so easy to become hurt and resentful. But if we can accept reproof and obediently follow good advice, we become better people — recipients of real treasure. Reproof given in humility and love can bring us to a closer walk with God. Friends God can use to point out areas of weakness in our life are rare. Treasure them dearly. Learn to listen and if the reproof is fitting, be obedient and make corrections. How much better our Christian fellowship would be if we could both reprove and accept reproof without offense! How we could edify and build one another up in the faith! Have you received the treasure of reproof recently? Are you ready for it?

Proverbs 22:4, "Humility and the fear of the Lord bring wealth and honor and life." We who long for spiritual treasure will find it only as we exercise true humility. Humility is possible when we view and reverence God properly and see ourselves in the mirror of His perfection. Then, and only then, can we respond to reproof or praise in the right way. Then we are capable of handling real treasure.

Continually the book of Proverbs calls us to seek knowledge and understanding. Last month many of you started off the New Year by making resolutions. Perhaps you, like I, resolved to be more diligent in reading God's Word. Don't give up! Continue on! "If you seek wisdom as silver and search for her as for hidden treasures, then you will understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God," Proverbs 2:4-5. What a promise! By studying His Word and delving into its treasures we can come to a greater understanding of our God and begin to really know Him. Happy treasure hunting! May you be filled with all the riches of God in Christ Jesus. □

Western Regional WHFMS

Eighteen delegates and seven guests were present for the business session of the region at Portland, Oregon last October, President Maxine Lobb presiding. Pastor Rick Reynolds of Seattle led the ladies in devotions. Their suggested budget for United Ministries is $40 per member annually with $5.50 for dues. They voted to sell note pads and ceramic tiles with the WHFMS logo to raise money for a scholarship fund to develop Christian Ministries.

Fern Smith of Lewiston, Idaho offered prayer for the new officers for the triennium. Officers are: President Nancy Winslow, Vice-president Marjorie Pitts, Secretary Elsie Meeker, and Treasurer Marlene Forester.

A Touch of Kindness

I was at my bank trying to straighten up numerous legal matters. I had already been in and out of the vault twice. After I asked the third time for permission to enter the vault and to have the key, the young lady seemed exasperated with me. Then I explained to her that I was sorry to cause so much trouble. I told her my husband had recently died and I was totally unfamiliar with banking procedures. My husband had always taken care of such matters. With a tremendous look of concern on her face, she actually reached out her hand and touched me. It reminded me of Christ's compassion and was reassuring to me in the midst of my difficulties.

Contributed by Betty Bockover
WHFMS President, Sparta, Ohio

Lapel Pins Available

We have received a new shipment of WHFMS lapel pins. The current price is $14 including postage and handling. These are 10 karat gold-filled pins with blue enamel and safety clasp. To order, please use the coupon below and mail to the Department of Women's Ministries, P.O. Box 23152, Charlotte, NC 28212.

Please send _____ WHFMS lapel pin(s) @$14 each to:

Name _____

Street address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip ____

Mission Prayer Partnership

FEBRUARY

19 **Pray** for **Beryl Joy Hollis** as she ministers among our churches in the Madras area.

20 **Pray** for **Frank** and **Judy Jewett** and the continued expansion of the work in the San Vicente Fellowship in Cebu.

21 **Pray** for the Financial Director **Robert Cole** as he manages the many aspects of financial operations of a denomination.

22 **Pray** for **Dave Vignali** as he ministers in the care of our finances in the Philippines.

23 **Pray** for God's blessing on our retired missionaries.

24 **Pray** for **Frances** and **Lynn Ssebikindu** as they reach out for souls in Memphis.

25 **Pray** for the prison ministry outreach in Memphis that it will produce many souls for Him.

26 **Pray** for **Marion Damon** in these the closing weeks of her deputation before she returns to **India.**

27 **Pray** for **Floyd** Powers and his ministry in the Hotel Hilton in Osaka that it will reach many souls for Christ.

28 **Pray** for **Musa** Powers as a missionary, wife, and mother that God would bless her especially on this her birthday.

March

1 **Pray** for another record breaking **Penny Crusade.** Let's believe God for better than $275,000 this year.

2 **Pray** for **Thambusamy** and **Victoria Devairakkam** as they lead a growing church in **Malaysia.**

3 **Pray** for the church planting ministries of our denomination.

4 **Pray** for **Advent Christian missionaries** who are serving with other missions that God will bless their labors for Him.

5 **Pray** for **Superintendent E.A. Akpan,** as he aids the growing churches in **Nigeria.**

6 **Pray** for **Austin** and **Dorothy Warriner** in their ministry at Asukano and at the Bible school in **Japan.**
7 **Pray** for the presidents of our **National Advent Christian Conferences** and their work.
8 **Pray** for **Barbara White** and her labors in the Kodaikanal work.
9 **Pray** for **Lucas** and **Beulah Devasahayam** in their growing work in **Malaysia.**
10 **Pray** for a greater giving to our Capital Funds Drive for the expansion of our work in **India, Malaysia,** and the **Philippines.**
11 **Pray** that the Lord of the harvest will thrust out laborers into His harvest.
12 **Pray** for those studying for mission service, that God will guide them especially in this time.
13 **Pray** for **Alice Brown** as she prepares to come home on furlough.
14 **Pray** that the Lord will open hearts of many on our various fields of ministry.
15 **Pray** for **Dr. Roland Griswold** and his vital ministry in Church Expansion.
16 **Pray** for **Steve** and **Ann Lay** as they teach others English, the Bible and about Jesus Christ.
17 **Pray** for our chaplains that they might reach many service men for Christ.
18 **Pray** for **Margaret Helms** that God would bless her as she shares her testimony among the churches.

Mission Directory

INDIA

Barbara White (January 14)
Box 17, Andivilla
Kodaikanal 624101
INDIA

Beryl Joy Hollis (December 16)
American Advent Mission
Velacheri, Madras 600 042
INDIA

JAPAN

Steven Lay (November 28)
Ann Lay (September 13)
Beth Lay (March 26, 1975)
Timothy Lay (June 18, 1977)
3-2-35 Asukano Minami
Ikoma Shi, 630-01
JAPAN

Austin Warriner (January 1)
Dorothy Warriner (January 18)
Japan Advent Christian Mission
3-37 Okayama Higashi 5 Chome
Shijonawate Shi
Osaka Fu 575
JAPAN

Floyd Powers (October 8)
Musa Powers (February 28)
Rebecca Powers (November 11, 1971)
1478 Shironomae
Mikage-Cho
Higashinada-Ku
Kobe 658
JAPAN

MALAYSIA

Thambusamy Devairakkam
Victoria Devairakkam
Advent Christian Church
3A, Jalan Sayang Housing Trust
86000 Kluang, Johor
MALAYSIA

Lucas Devasahayam
Beulah Devasahayam
A.C. Bethel Church
30, Taman Gembira
Post kod-42700
Banting, Selangor
MALAYSIA

PHILIPPINES

Frank Jewett (December 1)
Judy Jewett (January 29)
Danny Jewett (June 13, 1976)
Timmy Jewett (June 26, 1978)
Letitia Jewett (April 13, 1980)
P.O. Box 263
Cebu City 6401
PHILIPPINES

David Vignali (May 10)
P.O. Box 263
Cebu City 6401
PHILIPPINES

Alice Brown (March 24)
Box 223
Cagayan de Oro City 8401
PHILIPPINES

Howard Towne (May 5)
Anna May Towne (June 11)
Dansalan College Foundation
P.O. Box 5430
Iligan City 8801
PHILIPPINES

MEMPHIS MISSION

Francis Ssebikindu (May 13)
Lynne Ssebikindu (May 8)
Faith Nancy (September 28, 1982)
Ashley Grace (January 21, 1985)
2590 Faxon Ave.
Memphis, TN 38112

ON LEAVE

Bessie Smith (March 27)
Box 657, Waukewan Street
Meredith, NH 03253

ON FURLOUGH

Marion Damon (March 27)
c/o Mrs. Elbert Damon
209 Wendell Road
Miller's Falls, MA 01349

Margaret Helms (September 18)
3612 Brief Rd. E
Monroe, NC 28110

*The missionaries' birthdates follow their names.

CHARLES COLSON

In Search of the Evil Empire

We Americans have a propensity for putting things and people into neat categories. Like in the old movies when all villains wore black waxed mustaches and swirling capes, and all heroes were tall, robust and blond. The "cops and robbers, good guy and bad guy" mentality is as American as apple pie.

And we like to be told how good we are. So every President since Eisenhower has quoted the well-known line attributed to de Tocqueville: "America is great because she is *good.* And if America ever ceases to be *good,* America will cease to be great." It's good politics, a sure-fire applause getter.

But the problem comes when we begin to believe our own press releases, for these pleasant platitudes can pervert our view of the nature of man—dangerously so. President Reagan's controversial speech in 1983 urging the National Association of Evangelicals to oppose the nuclear freeze movement provides a case in point.

"We know that living in this world means dealing with...the doctrine of sin...There is sin and evil in the world. And we are enjoined by Scripture and the Lord Jesus to oppose it with all our might," the President proclaimed to the thunderous applause of 1,500 evangelical church leaders. Then Reagan put the issue squarely: the Communists are "the focus of evil in the modern world," and so U.S. military strength is essential to restrain the "aggressive impulses of an evil empire."

Some critics had near apoplexy over the President's speech. It is "illegitimate in the American system..[to] use sectarian religiosity to sell a political program," shrieked Anthony Lewis of the *New York Times.* "Foul," cried others, that Reagan should mix religion and politics.

Nonsense. There is nothing unusual about politicians using church forums to advance their causes (freeze supporters openly court religious groups). What is more, the nuclear question is a profoundly moral issue, and evangelicals had better face up to it.

No, the difficulty is not in the President urging church people to back a position he keenly believes is in the interest of national security. *The problem is in his theology*—though his appreciative audience didn't seem to mind.

For the Bible tells us that *all* men and women share the same natural disposition. As common heirs of the Fall we *all* are sinners. And we are not sinners because we sin, as theologian R.C. Sproul says, we sin because we are sinners. For the sin is in us.

Yet we in the U.S. persist in believing that humanity (at least the American species) is really innately good, and can eventually be perfected through evolution and education. (Socrates made the same argument—but the history of 2,000 years has done nothing but prove him wrong.) This belief that we can make ourselves better, and are in the process of doing so, is the very essence of humanism. It is also the most subtle and dangerous delusion of our times.

And whichever side of the political spectrum we align ourselves with, this false theology can blind us. On the right, it can breed a dangerous chauvinism, justifying "holy crusades" against "evil empires"; on the left, it often causes us to see no evil in our adversaries, and thus undercuts morally justified deterrent defenses.

In domestic affairs, this blindness to our sin can be equally pernicious. It's one reason our criminal justice system, for example, is in such a shambles. Some liberals believe that since man is really good, when he breaks the law it must be society's fault. Man is not depraved, they say, just deprived—which sounds compassionate but is deadly, destroying all sense of individual accountability.

Some conservatives, on the other hand, believe that the vast majority of people (the good folks, that is)? ought to be protected from those flawed few who should be locked up forever. Hence life imprisonment for a nonviolent thief who had stolen $221 worth of merchandise.

We will never find answers to our problems, at home or abroad, until we face the truth about the human conditions. Yet our very nature makes us invariably look for evil everywhere except the one place we're sure to find it. And sadly the church all too often fails to preach the convicting truth.

America's blend of civil religion, humanism, and comforting platitudes may be good politics—but good politics can make bad theology. Ironically, one of the most discerning voices of our times is a former prisoner of the "evil empire" President Reagan spoke about. Following his conversion to Christ in the Soviet gulag, Alexander Solzhenitsyn wrote, "...it was disclosed to me that the line separating good and evil passes not through states, nor between classes, nor between parties either—but right through every human heart—through all human hearts."

The evil empire? We needn't search distant continents. The Bible tells us where to look. It is in us. □

From Who Speaks for God. *Used by permission.*

GOOD GIVING

This seal is our pledge that your gifts are used as you planned.

As a member of the Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability (ECFA), we follow high standards for fundraising . . . standards that help set us apart from other ministries.

ECFA is an alliance of more than 300 evangelical ministries dedicated to honest accounting, financial integrity, and good stewardship.

Thank you for your support of

Advent Christian General Conference

To learn more about ECFA, write:

Arthur C. Borden, President, Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability, P.O. Box 17511, Washington, DC 20041-0511, (703) 938-6006.

3

ACQ4348
University of North Carolina
Serials Dept Davis Library
080 A
Chapel Hill, NC 27514

C286.7
A24

Advent Christian WITNESS

March 1987

PROTECTING OUR CHILDREN

continuing the fight against Pornography

pages 4 and 8

Member
epa
Evangelical Press Association

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
Robert J. Mayer

MISSIONS
Harold Patterson

WHFMS
Caroline M. Michael

GRAPHIC ARTS
Linda Perault

TYPESETTING
Susan Gettis

EFMA MEMBER MISSION

EVANGELICAL COUNCIL FOR FINANCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY ECFA MEMBER
The symbol of trust

Advent Christian Witness (ISSN 0741-4307) is published monthly except for a combined July-August issue, 11 times a year, by the Advent Christian General Conference of America, 14601 Albemarle Road, P.O. Box 23152, Charlotte, NC 28212. Postmaster: Send address changes to *Advent Christian Witness*, P.O. Box 23152, Charlotte, NC.

Policy: As the official publication of the Advent Christian General Conference of America, the *Advent Christian Witness* publishes the teachings of the Advent Christian Church and promotes the task of evangelism both in North America and throughout the world.

Rates in the U.S. and Canada: one year, $11.00. Single Copy, $1.00. Overseas one year, $14.00.

All articles and materials are copyright ©1987 by the Advent Christian General Conference unless otherwise indicated. Permission to reprint available upon request. The views expressed in this magazine are those of the author and may not necessarily reflect those of the editor or the Advent Christian General Conference.

from the editor

Victimless Crime?

"Those moralists want to control what I can read and watch in my own home! As long as it doesn't hurt anyone else, they have no right to tell me what to do!" Ever since the battle against pornography heated up three years ago, cries of "censorship" and "victimless crime" have arisen from pornography advocates and some civil libertarians. What's interesting and almost humorous about those cries is that even a cursory look at them reveals faulty logic and deliberate attempts to mislead people.

Is pornography a "victimless crime?" Not according to Father Bruce Ritter, director of Covenant House, a ministry to homeless young people in New York City. Of the 12,000 kids who come to him for help, fully 60% have been involved in prostitution or pornography. "I have frankly lost all patience with that kind of argument!" declares Father Ritter, "There is an absolute, direct relationship between pornography and what happens to these children."

Father Ritter's assertions are echoed by law enforcement officials and a host of studies dealing with pornography's relationship with rape and other sex crimes. Victimless? Not for the thousands of women and children exploited by the pornography industry.

"OK," the civil libertarians concede, "Some people may be hurt by extreme forms of pornography, but after all this is a free country and if you try to restrict it, you're engaging in censorship." Again, we find this assertion absurd and manipulative.

The Supreme Court has consistently affirmed that slander, libel, and obscenity are not protected by the first amendment. The first amendment does not guarantee you the right to yell "fire" in a crowded building. It does not allow you to libel or slander another person. Moreover, obscenity is well defined in constitutional law.

The 1973 Miller decision declares that material may be declared obscene if:

- The average person, applying contemporary community standards finds the work, taken as a whole, appeals to prurient interest
- The work depicts or describes, in a patently offensive way, sexual conduct specifically defined by applicable state or federal law; and
- The work, taken as a whole, lacks serious literary, artistic, political or scientific value.

Wise people recognize the "censorship" smokescreen for what it is: An effort by a multi-dollar industry to exploit people, primarily women and children, and destroy their lives. Because Jesus placed the highest value on human life, Christians must continue the battle against pornography and the harm it causes society. □

Volume 35 Number 3

Advent Christian WITNESS

March 1987

FEATURES

Battling for Decency an interview with Joseph Chambers 4
A prominent leader in the fight against Pornography talks about obscenity related issues and the need for Christians to continue the battle against Pornography.

The Little Platoons and the Big War Charles Colson 8
Over the last three years, the multi-billion dollar Pornography industry has suffered a stunning series of setbacks. Charles Colson shows us how the involvement of Christian citizens has led to this.

Missions: What the Bible Says Harold Patterson 10
What does Scripture teach about missions? The Director of World Missions shares Biblical principles for why Advent Christians seek to minister around the world.

Pastoral Stress: Stalking a Killer in the Church Sara Langley 12
Do you know what stresses your Pastor faces? Some helpful ways you can be helpful to your Pastor.

The Tough Side of Visions Clayton Blackstone 15
Developing a vision for God's people is crucial to the work of the church. Pastor Blackstone continues his series from Ezra.

ON THE COVER

More and more, children are becoming victims of pornography. Once again, the *Advent Christian Witness* focuses on the pornography plague and what Christians are doing to combat it.

DEPARTMENTS

From the Editor 2

Women's Ministries 18

Prayer Partnership 21

Mission Directory 22

An Interview with Joseph Chambers

Battling for Decency

Five years ago, Rev. Joseph Chambers purchased a copy of *Life* magazine at a small 7-11 store in Charlotte, North Carolina. Little did he realize that small act would open a door for him to help lead the fight against pornography in Charlotte and throughout the country.

What Joseph Chambers saw in that magazine forced him to realize that somebody had to do something about the rampant spread of pornography and its exploitation of women and children. Soon after, he started *Concerned Charlotteans,* an effort by Christians to call attention to the pornography plague and its horrifying effects on American life.

Since that time, Rev. Chambers has appeared on numerous radio and television programs, including a recent "appearance" on the Phil Donahue show, calling attention to the horrors of pornography. *Concerned Charlotteans* has been instrumental in helping pass a tough new anti-obscenity law in North Carolina.

Through all this, he has remained pastor at Paw Creek Church of God. The *Advent Christian Witness* interviewed Rev. Chambers in his church office just after the Attorney General's Commission on pornography released its final report.

Rev. Chambers, you have been active in the fight against pornography since 1982. What

motivated you to get involved?

Bob, one event really awakened me to how bad the problem was. I had gone to the 7-11 Store, and purchased a copy of Life magazine. There was a picture of President Reagan on the front. I, of course, read the article and was reviewing the magazine and came across a full-page, full-color picture of a woman nude from the waist up laying between the rear legs of a German Shepherd dog kissing the dog in the mouth. It was a clear pose simulating bestiality. I realized that pornography had come from back street gutters to Main Street America, and I knew somebody had to do something.

Can you describe for our readers why you feel pornography is a serious problem?

Many statistics show us how bad pornography really is. An NBC documentary reported that 50,000 children disappear every year in America. That's one hundred and fifty each day. I just read a report that 5,000 children each year are found dead, mutilated, or killed in some form or fashion. So when you think of 150 children disappearing every day that in itself is incredible.

There are other facts, 77% of all boy child molesters admit modeling themselves after pornography. 87% of all girl child molesters admit modeling themselves after pornography. It's clear that many forms of anti-social behavior especially relating to rape and to other crimes against women and children is the result of the desensitizing effects of obscenity. Every law enforcement person I have ever heard admitted the connection between violent crimes, anti-social behavior and obscene materials.

Last month the Meese Commission on Pornography released its report. How do you feel about the commission report and are there any of its findings in particular that you found significant?

While I have not yet read the entire report, from what I have read and heard, it seems that the report is basically good. There are a few weaknesses.

I think that the Meese Commission report is a giant step in the right direction. It's already created a tremendous amount of debate in the secular media, which in itself is good. It has caused a big response from the pornography barons. They are now fighting for pornography from their perspective. That's good for Christians. The more they talk about their rights and the more they defend themselves, the more Americans are going to see how sick pornography really is. Americans will say, "Wow, these are not the kind of people we want to follow, this is not the kind of lifestyle we want for our children and our grandchildren."

The Meese Report has crystalized the national debate. It has both sides talking. It's got people who were not previously interested reading, listening, and learning. It is causing Christians to get involved in the debate. That's good, because the biggest problem about pornography is the ignorance of the American people as to how bad it really is.

You've lead right into an issue I wanted to focus on, the issue of censorship. Critics have accused the Meese Commission of advocating censorship. *The Charlotte Observer* has cautioned against what they call censorship in dealing with pornography. Is pornography protected by the First Amendment in your opinion?

The Supreme Court has said on numerous occasions that pornography is not protected by the Constitution or the First Amendment. There are a large number or areas of speech not protected; defaming someone, or yelling fire in a crowded building, etc. No, pornography is not protected by the First Amendment. That's very clear.

Censorship suggests prior restraint, there is nothing about the Meese Commission Report, or the new obscenity law in North Carolina that suggests censorship or prior restraint. We are simply saying, if you dispense obscenity, if you involve yourself in this anti-social behavior, you will be subject to the definitions of the law in a court of law where a jury of your peers will hear the evidence on both sides. They will decide if you are guilty or not guilty. That can never be considered as prior restraint or censorship. We also

need to consider the freedom of women and children. They have a right to as safe society where their rights are protected as well as those of questionable character.

Many distinguish between what they call soft-core and hard-core pornography. Are there in your mind degrees of pornography? Should law and law enforcement classify degrees of pornography?

Good question. Soft-core and hard-core pornography differ in levels of violence in how explicit the sex acts, and how perverted they may be. But while hard-core pornography does go much further, there is bestiality, homosexuality, lesbianism, and child involvement projected even in soft-core pornography.

Soft-core pornography is really the introduction. No person with their right mind could go straight to hard core pornography. Psychologists have determined four steps. I would suggest five beginning with simply curiosity. The person who sees soft-core pornography becomes involved out of curiosity. Then soft-core pornography leads to addiction.

Once a person is addicted to soft-core pornography, psychologists tell us they move into the third stage which is described as escalation. Escalation occurs when they are no longer satisfied by soft-core pornography. So they begin to seek out pornography that is more violent, more sensuous, and more extreme in its portrayal of sexual behavior.

So there is first curiosity, then addiction, then escalation. This is where hard-core pornography comes in. The person moves from soft-core to the hard-core pornography when they must have materials to satisfy what has become an escalated sexual appetite.

Once a person moves beyond escalation, the fourth step is desensitation. There is almost no sense of moral right and wrong at this point. Such an individual would not be shocked at anything including the death of the sex object. Pass this point is imitation where the material is acted out in real life. Such a person loses the distinction between fantasy and reality. That's where you get your serial killers, child molesters and rapists. The five stages, from curiosity to addiction to desensitation, to escalation to imitation; shows us how soft-core and hard-core pornography relate. They simply prepare one for the other.

What can concerned individuals and churches do to combat pornography in their communities?

Bob, the biggest need is education. The average Christian has no idea what exists in the pornography world or what kind of effect pornography is having upon our communities and our families. Pastors, church leaders, and law enforcement officials must educate people in our communities and in our churches as to what the problem is, how bad it is, and what actually happens in the world of pornography. That's the first step.

Of course, education must be followed up with action. We must organize the Christian community to speak: Individuals talking to individuals; people writing the editor in response to things printed in the papers; people calling their television station to complain when pornography is explicitly portrayed in different shows. When advertisers are involved in sponsoring questionable television programming, we need to write that sponsor.

Education and action must be ongoing year after year, decade after decade. The moral people in any community must speak, and be involved. If we do not stay involved, immorality simply comes by virtue of our not doing our job. God's people are like a dam holding off the forces of evil. If we remove ourselves from being salt and light evil normally and naturally take precedence and move into our communities.

I have read several cases where individuals and groups have had short-term success in curbing pornography. However after several months, efforts subside and the problem returns. What ongoing steps do Christians need to take to insure that pornography does not return to their communities?

Sometimes Christians need to be activated by a crisis before they are willing to do anything. But when the crisis seems to pass, we tend to forget and then the problem reoccurs. So, consistency, faithfulness, and tenacity have to be part of our makeup.

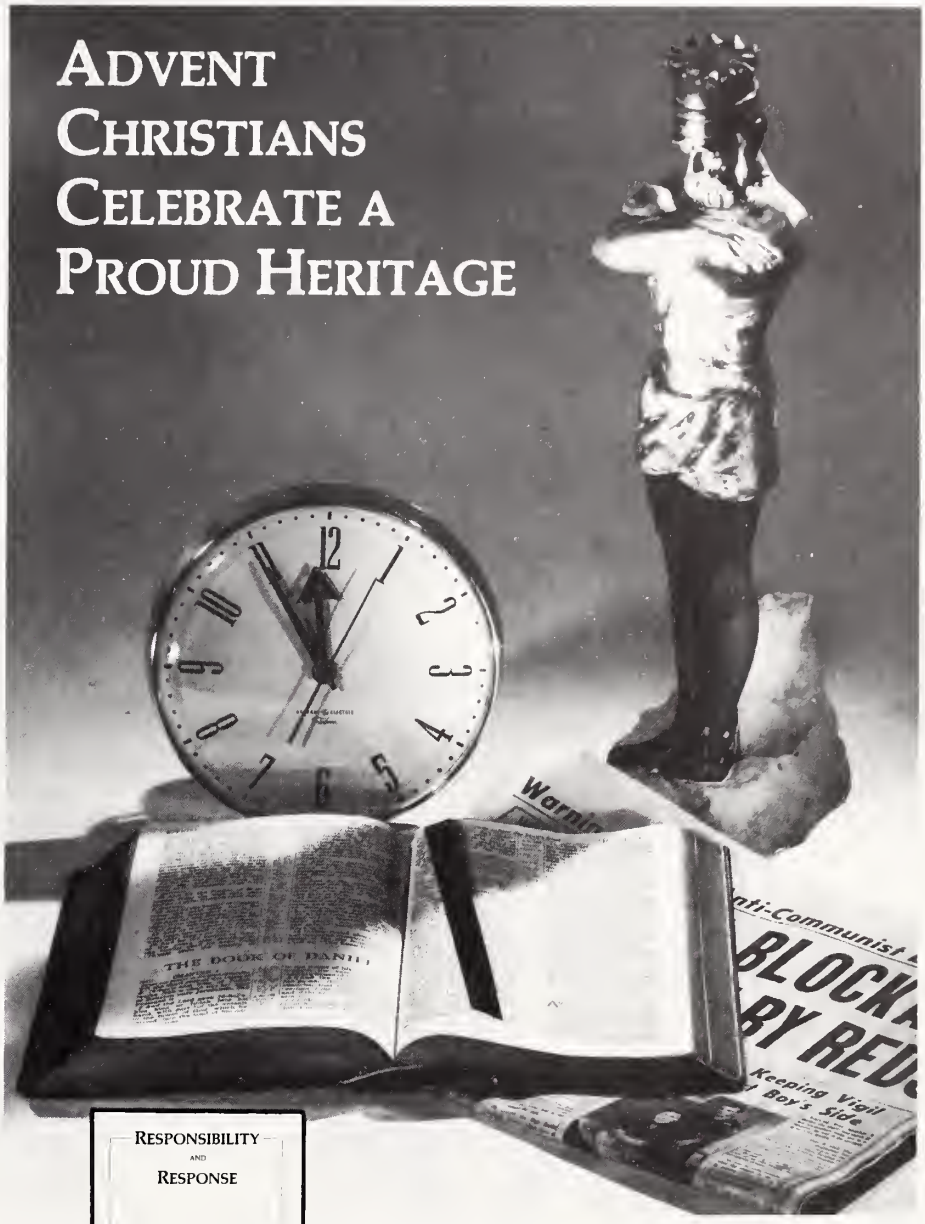
We have to organize ourselves to be a community of people united together irregardless of

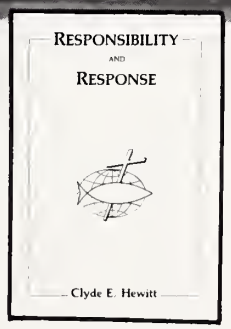
our denomination or tradition. We must stay organized and work together. Good organizations, like Concerned Charlotteans are here keeping people conscious of the problem and meeting together for a periodic review of what is happening. We have to be committed financially. Our denominations must realize that a church tradition is not an end unto itself, but should be a part of the overall picture. No church can have an answer to all our problems, but all of us united together can find answers to our problems. Those are the things that we must do.

One of the things that I imagine has excited you is the decision of Southland Corporation to remove pornographic magazines from 7-11 stores. They resisted that for two to three years. What do you think finally made them change their mind?

I know that they reviewed some of the Meese Commission's meetings. They were in some of those meetings, heard the statistics, heard the testimonies. They said this was their reason for deciding to remove pornography. I accept that, but I think there is more. People picketed their doors. Thousands of Americans stopped trading at 7-11 and had taken their business elsewhere.

I think it was a business decision influenced by the case building in America against pornography and against pornographers. I think it was a very wise decision, a good business decision. □





You can read about it in *Responsibility and Response*, Volume Two of the Advent Christian History Series.

Please send _____ copies of *Responsibility and Response* at $9.95 plus $1.25 postage for each copy.

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Responsibility and Response
Venture Bookstore
P.O. Box 23152 • Charlotte, NC 28212

The Little Platoons and the Big War

Charles Colson

Two recent developments in the decades-long struggle against pornography give us an instructive lesson in what really creates change in American society. After a year's descent into the murky world of smut, the Attorney General's Commission on Pornography surfaced. Its task, given by President Reagan, had been to study pornography and to "tell America what to do about it."

A tall order. The commission's charter took it into an arena where different perspectives passionately clash: the economic interests of the massive pornography industry; the concerns of civil libertarians, who see specters of censorship lurking in every paragraph; and the concerns of Christians, who see pornography as an odious symptom of widespread moral rot.

Pornography's adversaries have pinned great hopes on the panel's recommendations. After all, working through the leverage of big government seems the most effective way to destroy such a wide-spread social cancer.

As one of the nation's least-regulated industries, (earning six billion dollars in 1985), pornography recognizes few standards except the increasingly perverse tastes of its clientele. Michigan police statistics show that pornography was involved in 40 percent of its sexual assault cases. The FBI Academy issued a report tracing pornography's role in fantasies prior to sexual murder.

The Meese commission, which included "Focus on the Family's" Dr. James Dobson, found similar evidence. Dobson said the job, which included 12-hour days of wading through material such as "Pregnant Lesbians" and "Tri-Sexual Lust," was one of the most unpleasant experiences of his life. "I will never forget a particular set of photographs..." he says. "It focused on a cute, nine-year-old boy who had fallen into the hands of a molester. In the first picture, the blond lad was fully clothed and smiling at the camera. But in the second, he was nude, dead, and had a butcher knife protruding from his chest. I...thought I had seen it all. But my knees buckled, and tears came to my eyes..."

Christians should be grateful to James Dobson for taking on such a tough task. Because of his leadership, the report may now set the tone for national policies for years to come. The panel's report strongly supports the connection between some pornography and violent crimes. It also recommends tougher prosecution practices, stronger federal laws, and the vigorous enforcement of existing obscenity laws.

But just because the report is finished doesn't mean the problem is solved. Even if these laudable proposals make it through the legislative process—and that will be tough going—extended court challenges can be expected. Balancing free speech against the right of public freedom from smut is a delicate business. Purveyors of pornography have prevailed in many court decisions in the past; and, as Barry Lynn of the American Civil Liberties Union has boasted, "There are enough constitutional questions here to litigate for the next 20 years."

So, while we must keep fighting through litigation and legislation, we

must also be realistic: nothing in the record of recent years offers much hope that pornography's surging tides can be easily stemmed in the courts or the halls of Congress.

But, even as the commission was finishing its report, the pornography industry did suffer its first major blow in years—in a way that caught just about everyone by surprise.

When Jack Eckerd, founder of the Eckerd Drug chain, became a Christian in 1983, he gained a new perspective on the *Playboy* and *Penthouse* magazines sold in his stores. He called his company's president and told him he wanted the magazines out. The executive protested. Jack Eckerd persisted. Eventually all 1,700 Eckerd drugstores dropped their copies of *Playboy* and *Penthouse*.

Eckerd wrote to the directors of other retail stores, encouraging them to stop stocking the magazines. When his letters went unanswered, he wrote again.

Meanwhile, thousands of Christians, organized under the National Coalition Against Pornography, were taking their stand as well—through widespread picketing and a boycott of stores selling "adult magazines."

The pressure began to pay off. Like dominoes, stores began to remove *Playboy* and *Penthouse*:one by one, Revco, Peoples, Rite-Aid, Dart Drug, Gray Drug, and High's Dairy Stores all pulled pornography from their shelves.

And finally, last April, the last major hold-out gave in as well: 7-Eleven removed pornography from its 4,500 stores and recommended that its 3,600 franchises do the same.

Thus, without one debate before Congress or one case won in the courts, nearly 12,000 retail stores have cleaned pornography from their shelves!

Playboy's lawyers, shocked at the blow, are arguing that a letter written from the Meese commission put coercive pressure on the stores. Maybe it did have an impact. But the real impetus came not from the government, but from the inexorable pressure of thousands of Christians and the courageous action of one man who was converted and immediately put his faith into practice, right in his own line of business.

This victory against a formidable foe has given many Christians a renewed vision—moral change *is* possible after all!

The 19th-century English political writer, Edmund Burke, would have applauded such strategy. He wrote about the value of "little platoons"—private, voluntary groups of people that shape the conscience of a country and accomplish far more than the machinations of big government.

In today's culture, obsessed with solutions that come from the top down, this is a radical notion. But, as the anti-pornography campaign makes clear, we don't need to place all our hopes in government. When we accept personal responsibility to act as salt and light, right where we are, the results can be spectacular. Our "little platoons," like Gideon's tiny band, can put the greatest armies to flight. □

©1986 by Prison Fellowship from Jubilee. *Used with permission.*

Missions: What the Bible Says

Harold Patterson

"Savages slay missionaries," read the headlines some thirty years ago. I, like so many millions of others, was saddened and deeply impressed at the report of the five missionaries who were slain by the Auca Indians, especially when they could have defended themselves.

The world in general and many, many Christians wondered, "Why did they go into such fierce territory and why did they fail to defend themselves?" The answer was to spread the gospel at all costs. The missionary heritage they added to included men like David Branard who declared, "I want to wear out my life in His service for His glory...I cared not where or how I lived, or what hardships I went through so I could but gain souls for Christ."

Perhaps even greater are the words of the Apostle Paul writing to the church at Corinth in his second letter, *"Are they servants of Christ? (I am out of my mind to talk like this.) I am more. I have worked much harder, been in prison more frequently, been flogged more severely, and been exposed to death again and again. Five times I received from the Jews the forty lashes minus one. Three times I was beaten with rods, once I was stoned, three times I was shipwrecked, I spent a night and a day in the open sea, I have been constantly on the move. I have been in danger from rivers, in danger from bandits, in danger from my own countrymen, in danger from Gentiles; in danger in the city, in danger in the country, in danger at sea; and in danger from false brothers. I have labored and toiled and have often gone without sleep; I have known hunger and thirst and have often gone without food; I have been cold and naked. Besides everything else, I face daily the pressure of my concern for the churches" (2 Corinthians 11:23-28).*

Have you wondered, with millions of others, what prompts or motivates people to take such suffering and even martyrdom for the cause of Christ.

Motivations for sacrifical missionary service has been researched for many years. Some of the less than ideal motives for missionary service have been romantic and fanciful ideas; a desire to travel particularly at someone else's expense; the lure of the exotic and different; a stirring of the emotions alone; a desire to be recognized as a spiritual hero; a sense of working out one's own salvation; and a desire to please others. Its been proven that people responding to missionary service for these reasons do not last long.

The Bible reveals clear and valid motivations for missionary service.

I have chosen to group these into three headings based on one's commitment to Christ, one's inner compulsion, and one's concern for the lost.

Commitment

When a person is in love with and commited to Jesus Christ, he or she is anxious to please Him. Jesus said, "if you love me, you will keep my commandments."

One of the most important commandments Jesus gave us is recorded in the Great Commission, Matthew 28:19-20. A Sunday school teacher shared this illustration with me some years ago. During the reign of England's Queen Victoria, a missionary happened to be at a social attended by a rather outspoken army major in India. "Why are you here? They don't want you here, declared the army major."

The missionary shot back with an answer, "Are you serving the queen?" The army major drew himself up to his full stature and said, "I will go wherever the Queen would order me" was his reply. The missionary smiled and said, "That's why I am here. You are under the orders of the Queen, my orders come from the King of Kings. I have to come." This article could well stop here for there is no greater motivation to missionary service than obedience to the command of Christ.

Compassion

One who possesses the mind of Christ will share that compassion. Jesus, in looking over the city of Jerusalem, said in Luke 13:34, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee; how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not!" Jesus, in another place, was recorded as weeping over Jerusalem. Romans 5:5 reads, "the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost."

A veteran rescue mission worker and a young recruit were riding on a bus in a big city when they were going through a depressed, crime ridden area. They saw some young, dirty children playing out on the street corner. The young recruit exclaimed, "Oh, how dirty and wretched they are. Somebody should help them." The veteran rescue worker said, "No one will help them until the hate for their dirt and the love for their souls comes together in one person."

Are you that kind of person? One committed to Christ must hear the words when He said, "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten son." The gospels record that Jesus ministered not only to Jews, but to Samaritans and Greeks. We need the same kind of world view and world concern that our Saviour had.

Compulsion, challenge, and constraint

It's not only our love for the Saviour in seeking to be obedient to Him, but an inner compulsion that draws us to missionary service. When Isaiah heard the voice from the throne of Heaven asking, "who should go for us?" he said, "here am I, send me." It was Paul who would lament, "Woe is unto me if I preach not the gospel."

Most do not realize the inner drive of those who are called that must go or there is no rest for their souls.

There is also the challenge and the promise that sends those forth. In Psalms 2:8, the Lord promises the heathen for our inheritance. Jesus would say to those who would follow Him, "lift up your eyes, behold the fields are white unto harvest." The Lord promises a harvest for those who will go. What a challenge to go and to minister in His name. Be assured that there will be a reaping time.

There is a constraining to go because we have heard and have experienced salvation, that we should share it with others. In Romans 1:14, Paul said he was a debtor, both to the Jew and to the Greek.

Perhaps you have heard the story of the blind man cured of his cataracts by an operation of a missionary doctor. When he realized he could see he ran out without even saying thank you. The doctor was somewhat discouraged until about an hour later there was a knock on his door and when he opened it, there was this man with a rope over his shoulder and twelve other blind men holding on! We have a responsibility to share in not only the news of the disease of sin, but it's cure.

There is also a desire for the crown of the soul winner. Paul would remind the church at Philippi in Philippians 1:4, that they were his joy and crown of rejoicing. Someone has said that the only thing you can take out of this world is people. We are reminded that there are those who will shine in the kingdom because they have been soul winners according to Daniel.

Continued on page 14

PASTORAL STRESS:

Stalking a Killer in the Church

Sandra Langley

Stress is a real part of any minister's home, as I learned first-hand.

Sitting in a hospital lounge just outside the Intensive Care unit, my mother, my brother and I sorted out the facts. My father, a pastor for 35 years, lay recovering in ICU from two heart attacks.

How could this happen?

Dad was an active sportsman and an excellent amateur golfer. But the physician had explained to the family that pastors, according to insurance statistics, are in the highest risk group for heart attacks because of the unrelenting stress of the pastorate places on a person.

Phones ring constantly. People are critical. Some ministers struggle with inadequate pay. And since the pastorate is not a 9 to 5 job, parishioners falsely assume that most of his time is free.

The New Testament exhorts us to love each other, encourage one another, and minister to each other's needs. Can you minister to your minister? Is there a way you could reduce the stress in his life?

Here are some of the most common stresses I observed in 21 years as a child of the manse, as the wife of a seminary professor and as a close friend to dozens of pastors and their wives.

Problems

1. The first stress is that congregatons generally want to "live with" but not "marry" a new pastor. From the start of a ministry this is a dangerous attitude because the premise is "If (meaning 'when') we don't like him, we can get rid of him." Of course the Lord may lead your pastor elsewhere. But you shouldn't hasten that move.

2. The ministry is more complicated than a layman can imagine. It is tempting to make hasty judgments about things your pastor does and it is tempting to tell the pastor what to do. Both these factors place unneeded stress on your pastor.

A deacon once challenged his pastor in a committee meeting to put in as much as 40 hours a week, unaware that 60 or 70 were normal.

3. Many congregations assume that they are hiring the pastor AND his wife. Certainly she has been called to your church just as surely as he has. But do NOT assume that you are getting two for the price of one. Perhaps the Lord has called her to minister primarily in the home or in an outside job.

4. And speaking of hiring, inadequate pay creates horrible stress. A pastor should make about what the average member of his congregation makes. He

needs food, underwear, and car repairs just as much as you do.

5. A pastor's home life is interrupted all the time. The phone rings constantly, many times with questions that should be answered elsewhere. "What time is the Ladies' Bible Study meeting at the Smith's house?" is typical.

At 2 a.m. one Saturday night my father received an urgent call from a maiden lady. Her elderly mother had fallen out of bed. Would he come and help put her back? Sunday morning the doctor, also a member of the church, inquired in an annoyed tone why the lady hadn't called him. "Well!" she replied. "I didn't want to wake you up!"

6. Criticism (and here I am referring to the unjust variety) is difficult for any of us. Remember, most workers have one or two superiors. A pastor is the "hired hand" of the whole congregation. Put yourself in the position of getting negative feedback from dozens or hundreds of people.

My father once called faithfully on a hospitalized woman whose illness made her delirious. He visited her and prayed with her regularly. When he went to call on her after she was at last at home she sneered, "It's about time! I thought you were dead." She had mistaken my father in her delirium for a former pastor and angrily assumed that he had abandoned her.

7. Your pastor lives with the stress of bearing the burdens of many people. He himself needs to unburden. He's not Superman.

Heading in the right direction

1. Seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness. This should be true of any part of our lives. Enter the pastor-church relationship with the same attitude that would be appropriate for entering marriage: live as though you were in it for the long run.

2. Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.Again, this command should touch every area of our lives. Remember that the pastor and his family have submitted to you. To be obedient to the Lord himself, you should do the same. Humility should be our goal in all personal relationships. There is no room for pride in the Kingdom.

3. and 4. The laborer is worthy of his wages and your pastor labors even more than you think he does. The Book of Proverbs is full of admonitions not to oppress one's workers.

5. Think before you dial. Could you ask someone else what time the covered dish supper is? Call that person instead of the pastor. The parsonage receives enough important and urgent calls without having to function as an information center.

6. Do you enjoy unjust criticism? Neither does your pastor's family. Treat others as you wish to be treated yourself. Notice the log in your eye before picking at the speck in your pastor's eye.

7. Encourage your pastor to take the time he needs each week to be with his family. DON'T interrupt him on his day off (true emergencies excepted, of course). Encourage your pastor to spend time with friends outside the church. Many of the pastors I know are fantastic golfers. The time outdoors in a challenging game away from phones is therapeutic.

I once knew a prosperous layman who owned a seaside summer home that his family no longer used. He rented it reasonably, a week at a time, to ministers' families. It provided a glorious, restful location in an isolated spot.

In prayer you have access to an excellent way to minister to your pastor, "Pray for those who are in authority over you." Pray about your own attitudes and motivations. If exposure to God's Word humbles you, your heart is receiving and doing the Word. Or are you taking out on your pastor your rebellion against the Lord and His Word? □

© *Sara Langley.Used with permission.*

 Cont. from page 11

There is, I believe, in the heart of every sincere Christian, a concern for those who do not know Jesus Christ. We're reminded that they are in darkness and that He has offered light to them. Dark and discouraged as Ephesians tells us, lost and without hope, there is a concern to bring light, hope, and health to those who need to hear.

We all ought to be awed by the Scripture's teaching in Revelation 20, that all those whose names were not found written in the Lamb's book of life, were cast into the lake of fire, which is the second death. Reader, there is a Hell that someday all those who know not Christ will be cast into. It's a fearful thing. Paul reminds us in 2 Corinthians, "knowing the terror of the Lord, we persuade men, few would write that we should snatch them as brands from the burning."

Years ago, when I was a student at NEST (now Berkshire Christian College), some of us used to assist a lay preacher on Boston Common. He would go night after night. People would spit on him and some would threaten to beat him up and many would scoff. He would be there rain or shine.

One night I asked him, "Why do you do this? What drives you to do this?" He said, "I had a dream, a dream of a great mass of humanity marching forward and falling into the fires of Hell. I tried shouting and yelling and nobody would listen. Finally, I started knocking one down here and one down there. I couldn't stop them all, but I could stop a few. That's why I am here, to stop as many as I can from heading to the fires of Hell."

Do we have a responsibility to warn them? I believe we do. Why is it that hundreds die every minute without Jesus Christ, lost and doomed, for there is no other name given among men under Heaven whereby we must be saved according to Acts 4:12

Ezekiel gives us the word of the Lord in chapter 3:17-19, "Son of man, I have made you a watchman for the house of Isarel: so hear the word I speak and give them warning from me. When I say to a wicked man, 'You will surely die,' and you do not warn him or speak out to dissuade him from his evil ways in order to save his life, that wicked man will die for his sin, and I will hold you accountable for his blood. But if you do warn the wicked man and he does not turn from his wickedness or from his evil ways, he will die for his sin; but you will have saved yourself." We who know how the end of the age is to come, must be diligent, militant, and aggressive in warning those of judgment to come.

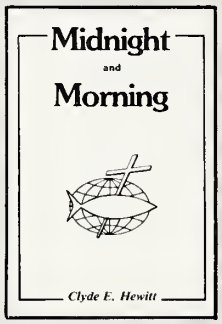
When we read even just these verses of Scripture, how we realize and feel the desire to go to share the word around the world. Oswald J. Smith would ask the question, "Is it right for any man to hear the gospel twice, when there are millions who have never heard it once?" Is the Lord speaking to your heart to dedicate your life to full time Christian service, possibly with Advent Christian missions? □

A graduate of N.E.S.T. (now Berkshire Christian College), Harold Patterson has pastored five Advent Christian congregations and now directs the Department of World Missions at the Advent Christian General Conference.

Midnight

and

Morning



A penetrating look at William Miller and the founding of the Advent Christian Church.

"A fascinating look at the history of the Millerite movement."

—Ministry

Available from:

Venture Bookstore
P.O. Box 23152
Charlotte, NC 28212

Please send _____ copies of Midnight and Morning at $8.95 each plus $1.25 for postage and handling.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____

Zip _____

The Tough Side of Visions

Ezra 4:1-24

Clayton Blackstone

The ride home seemed endless. Some chatted frivolously. Others cried. I sat in self-imposed silence. I resented any show of good humor. I seethed with anger at those who seemed so unaffected. My world collapsed. I wanted only to be left alone.

The disappointment I encountered during my seventeenth year was my initiation to the tough side of vision. As I reflect upon the times in life when I have felt like a VW sandwiched between two eighteen wheelers, I am reminded of this ragged side of reality.

I learned through this first disappointment that dreams don't always come true, even if you pursue them with single-hearted purpose.

Our basketball team set out on a quest for a state championship. The memory of former glory years flickered dimly for the home town folk. Our destiny was (or so we thought) to change all of that. But the bubble burst...the dream shattered by an inferior (in my objective opinion) team. Sometimes it still hurts to think about it.

The ragged edge of reality has popped some other bubbles, too. Several years ago I realized that non-Christians can be more sensitive and caring than believers who are suppose to be models of God's comfort. Delivered like a hard left to the jaw, I staggered, dazed by the impact.

And, like you, I've wrestled with some personal aspirations that have gone the way of the Edsel. It's been tough to admit I'll never be a Chuck Swindoll...tougher still to face the fact that large congregations don't develop just because I hang out my shingle.

Before you label me Mr. Ego, let's all drop our saintly masks for a refreshing breath of honesty. We all want to make our mark on the world. And a good many of us watch elatedly as our dreams appear to be coming true. To our horror, however, those grand aspirations can explode, leaving fragments of vision stuck to our faces like bits of bubble gum.

Guillermo Vilas, the Argentinean tennis pro observed that "many times one feels oneself to be secure, and suddenly, one's world falls down like a pack of cards in a matter of seconds."

The reality factor

It should come as no surprise that our problems are not unique. The Scriptures, as always, provide us with good, old fashioned, nailbiting realism. Ezra 4 helps us understand the "tough side of visions" and offers encouragement when we're on the mat wondering whether to get up or wait for the referee to finish his count.

People made great sacrifices to get back to Israel. They traded the comfort and security of Babylon for the lifestyle of nomads in order to build a Temple. Although they were itching to get started, they approached the project with careful planning and wisdom.

Confident that God stood with them, they stockpiled the necessary materials and tackled the task enthusiastically. Enter the reality factor.

When the enemies of Judah and Benjamin heard that the exiles were building a temple for the LORD, the God of Israel, they came to Zerubbabel and to the heads of the families and said, "Let us help you build because, like you, we seek

your God and have been sacrificing to him since the time of Esarhaddon king of Assyria, who brought us here."

But Zerubbabel, Jeshua and the rest of the heads of the families of Israel answered, "You have no part with us in building a temple to our God. We alone will build it for the LORD, the God of Israel, as King Cyrus, the King of Persia, commanded us."

—Ezra 4:1-4

At first glance it might appear that these Jewish patriots did not know a good offer when they saw it. But, *people's motives aren't always pure.*

It never hurts to look beyond the obvious. Let's review the rest of the story (You'll find it in 2 Kings 17:24f).

These seemingly willing helpers had arrived in Israel years before, resettled there by an Assyrian king. They followed God out of convenience, not conviction. Their worship was a farce. They paid lip service to the Lord, but their lifestyles remained as pagan as ever.

They planned to sabotage the rebuilding effort from the inside. Zerubbabel saw their hidden motives. To accept the offer would have doomed the rebuilding effort to frustration and almost certain failure.

A divided work force cannot produce a quality product. A splintered home abounds with conflict. A fractured church experiences growing frustration because of diverging aims.

Zerubbabel and company were a diverse group bonded together by their sense of purpose. They demonstrated great wisdom by refusing to dilute their ranks with people possessing impure motives. Unfortunately, their polite refusal was not the end of the matter.

Then the peoples around them set out to discourage the people of Judah and make them afraid to go on building. They hired counselors to work against them and frustrate their plans during the entire reign of Cyrus King of Persia and down to the reign of Darius king of Persia.

—Ezra 4:4, 5

When we're young, idealistic, and optimistic, problems offer themselves to us as opportunities. Somewhere along the line the cold hard fact sinks in...*some problems seem to go on forever.*

The pressure's on

Things took a vicious turn for the visionaries and stayed that way. The subtle attempt to thwart the rebuilding effort turned into a major frontal attack. The suggestions of treason, and a barrage of sneers, intimidations and threats up over a hundred year span.

The new community soon felt isolated and vulnerable. The onslaught took its toll. Work on the temple ground to a halt.

Constant opposition extracted a high price. It drained them of enthusiasm and energy. It sent them into retreat, scurrying to discover activities that would not rock the boat.

The pressure kept up...unrelenting even after the project shut down. Sixteen years passed before they dared try again. They went on to complete the temple, but did not complete the rebuilding of the city walls until Nehemiah came on the scene years later. Issues changed over the century but the problem hung on like a bad winter cold.

Cyrus, Darius, Xerxes, and Artaxerxes all received somber warnings about the activities of the Jewish exiles. Sometimes kings listened, sometimes the criticism fell on deaf ears. The fact remains...years of worship were lost, the victim of unrelenting criticism.

The writer demonstrates by the parenthesis of verses 6-23 that some problems seem to go on forever. Miss this and the process of vision realization will be stuck on permanent stall as we wait for calmer days.

A third jarring reality brings the chapter to an abrupt conclusion:

Thus the work on the house of God in Jerusalem came to a standstill until the second year of the reign of Darius king of Persia.

4:24 NIV

Dreams don't always come true, and even if they do it's seldom according to our timetable.

We live, without a doubt, far below our potential. Yet the argument that "we can achieve what we can conceive in our minds" denies reality. The shattered dreams which line the paths of our lives testify to the hollow nature of the philosophy.

The hammers ceased their chorus. The stones laid in scattered piles. The timbers rested where they had been last deposited. Together their silent refrain affirmed the sober reality.

Things began so positively. God stamped the mission with his seal of approval. They stockpiled the necessary supplies. They held to the best of intentions.

Yet, reality proved to be too formidable an opponent for this crew. They chose to set their mission

aside in the face of continued opposition, intending to pick it up again when things cooled off a bit.

From the parenthesis (vs. 6-23) and a survey of the writings of Haggai, we discover that things didn't get easier. Then complacency set in.

That's a part of the story we'll save for later. For now, we'll leave the visionaries feeling the same way I felt following our tournament loss...confused, uncertain of what was ahead. Their world, like mine, in collapse.

Joe Bayly's, "A Psalm in a Hotel Room" describes the feeling well.

I'm alone, Lord, alone, a thousand miles from home. There's no one here who knows my name except the clerk, and he spelled it wrong, no one to eat dinner with, laugh at my jokes, listen to my gripes, be happy with me about what happened today and say that's great. No one cares. There's just this lousy bed and slush in the street outside between the buildings. I feel sorry for myself and I've plenty of reason to. Maybe I ought to say I'm on top of it, praise the Lord, things are great; but they're not. Tonight it's all gray slush.[2]

We don't live in a fairy tale. Life abounds with paradoxes. Reality's ragged edge keeps life's experiences from always fitting neatly together.

Some valuable lessons

Yet with experience as our teacher, we may turn to the "children of exile" to learn. Since nobody wants to see progress grind to a halt, a victim of a "we can't" philosophy of life, let's review the events and extract some relevant principles.

Lesson one: *Wrong motives or teaming up with people who have wrong motives will directly affect the realization of our visions.*

Ruth Harms Calkin allows us to peer behind the drawn curtain to see her personal struggle with motives.

You know, Lord, how I serve You
With great emotional fervor
In the limelight.
You know how eagerly I speak for You
At a women's club.
You know how I effervesce when I promote a fellowship group.
You know my genuine enthusaism
At a Bible study.

But how would I react, I wonder
If you pointed me to a basin of water and asked me to wash the calloused feet
Of a bent and wrinkled old woman
Day after day
Month after month
In a room where nobody saw and nobody knew.[3]

The closing words echo and reecho in the recesses of our minds. Do our own mixed motives and hidden agendas classify us as ones detrimental to the task of vision realization?

Does it matter as long as we get the job done? For me the text leaves no doubt. Impure motives derail the best of objectives.

We must never shy from asking ourselves the tough questions. We cannot afford to deny the honest answers those questions demand. Our future depends upon it.

Lesson two: *The longer we stay down, the harder it is to get up.*

The prophet Haggai fills in the sixteen year gap in Ezra's account of the rebuilding effort. It took that long before the people could muster up the courage to try again.

They probably would not have gotten out of their rut then if God hadn't extracted contentment from the perks of life. Read Haggai 1:2-11.

We're not the first ones to experience tough times, and we won't be the last. And if God ordered a mission we put on hold we are headed for certain frustration. Times may be tough but if God has called us to a task it is not impossible. Don Marquis forces me to wonder if we want God's kingdom to come half as bad as we say we do. He writes in "The Lesson of the Moth"...

I was talking to a moth the other evening.
He was trying to break into an electric light bulb and fry himself on the wire.
"Why do you fellows pull this stunt?" I asked him.
"Because it is a conventional thing for moths?"
"Or why, if that had been an uncovered candle, instead of an electric light bulb,
You would now be a small, unsightly cinder.
Have you no sense?"
"Plenty of it," he answered, "but at times we get tired of using it. We get bored with the routine and crave beauty and excitement.
Fire is beautiful and we know that if we get too close it will kill us,
But what does it matter?
It is better to be happy for a moment and be burned up with beauty
Than to live a long time and be

Continued on page 23

Caroline Michael
Director

Lessons on Pain

Melodie Dean

In September of 1985, Dave and I attended a cultural orientation seminar in Manila. It was an hour travel by bus to and from the meeting place. In hopes of using my time wisely I worked on memorizing some Scriptures in Cebuano (also a part of my language requirements). The two verses I worked on were two that had spoken to me years previously:

Jeremiah 33:3 "Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and shew thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not."

Romans 8:28 "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."

Ruth, Rebekah, Melodie, and Thomas Dean

While working on these, rolling their words and phrases about in my mind and trying to fit them all together in proper Cebuano sequence, I felt the Lord trying to tell me something. He wasn't saying it in English, for the verses in English easily rolled off my tongue with nary a thought.

In the musings and meditation on the Cebuano, He was speaking to me especially through Jeremiah 33:3. So I answered Him back and said, "But Lord, You already have done great things for me. You raised me up in a fine Christian home with godly Christian grandparents and parents to influence my direction and an on-fire-for-You church for me to attend. I had loving Sunday school and V.B.S. teachers and youth leaders to teach me and they were good examples to follow. You fanned an interest in the mission field in my life and allowed it to come to pass. I have met again on the mission field many of the missionaries that I met as a child. And even greater yet, You know that when we came home on furlough, we weren't planning on returning to the Philippines; but, with counseling and much prayer, we're back. It's a miracle! You're going to do more? (What more was there to do? I wondered, but not too deeply, what He had up His sleeve this time.)

I did have some heartaches and unspoken requests that I had oft times laid before Him. I did not realize that His time had come for the answering of them, nor did I have any fathom of the pain that I would experience in the answering process. So His main message to me from Jeremiah was, "I have heard your call and requests and I am going to be doing some mighty, breathtaking things in the days ahead as I answer you."

Romans 8:28 was supposed to be the cushion or spoonful of sugar to help the medicine go down. A reminder to me that all things (those painful "I don't believe this is happening to me experiences," those "collasped dreams crushing in on me experiences," and those "picking up the pieces of my life and trying to put it back together experiences") work together (are used by God) for good (for our good) to them that love God, (those who seek to know Him and His will), to them who are called according to His purpose (to them who are in the doing of His will or purpose to which they have been called).

I had no idea at that time that within one week Dave would tell me we had to return home, that within two weeks we'd be moved out of our house, or that within three weeks my father would meet us at the airport. I had no idea what God was up to, and He wasn't skimpy on the pain either. I guess pain is one of our helpers/teachers or so *Hind's Feet in High Places* tells us. C.S. Lewis said in his *The Problem of Pain*, "God whispers to us in our pleasures, speaks in our conscience, but shouts in our pains; it is His megaphone to rouse a deaf world."

Our return was the pits. As Dave shared in one of his letters, "At the time it seemed that our abrupt departure from the field was the end...the end of a career, a marriage, and a faith." And if all of those ends were true in one spouse's life, quite logically it touches the other spouse. His vocation/career was my vocation/career and my childhood dreams of being a missionary and serving on the mission field were like the castles of sand being dashed by the waves of the incoming tide when a storm is brewing. His marriage was also my marriage, and because a good marriage was such a fundamental facet of my value system, I was under a great deal of emotional stress and pain, and I was angry.

Perhaps I should have been angry at Dave, as he was the one who got me into this mess, but he had enough problems he was tending to and for which he had to answer in the days ahead. As more problems loomed and the emotional tension became more painful, my anger brewed into fury. God was at work in David's life, yes, but He wasn't done with me either. My belief in God was far from lost; I knew Him and was angry at Him and at my home church.

I felt I'd been deceived. I guess all along I had believed that if a Christian seeks to do God's will and makes sure that he also marries a spouse who is a Christian and who also is seeking to do God's will, they will be blessed and live happily ever after. I didn't realize or wasn't aware of all of the *pain* in life. I don't know if I wasn't taught about it or just wasn't listening when it was taught.

In rereading through the Bible, it *is* there. We are not promised immunity to pain and problems. Paul, after he became a Christian, had a far cry from the health, wealth, prosperity, and success that some preachers are preaching. If we are really living the Word, the world is not going to be our friend and that can be down right painful physically, emotionally, and socially. The life of Christ, Paul, and the lives of the early and some later Christians will attest to this.

From October 1985 until August 1986 I had fought (hidden anger, bitterness, resentfulness) against God, despite the fact that He had done what He said He would do. Great and mighty things had happened in terms of Dave's career, marriage, and faith in God. (He even looks different, too.) God knew my problem and the festering sore within. He ministered to me in February, June, and August the same message, "Think about Job," given by the same person, my own husband; and I too have been healed.

God isn't finished with me yet. The third week in September 1986, I began teaching a first and second grade Sunday school class, and my first lesson was on pain. When God began to answer the prayers of the children of Israel and deliver them from Egypt, things went from bad to worse. After Moses had his first interview with Pharoah, they had to find their own straw and still fill their quota of bricks. Then came working without water (who wants to drink blood?), and then working with all those frogs, lice, etc.

It is said that the darkest time of the night is the hour before the dawn. I almost gave up during those dark days of October/November 1985 and how thankful I am for all your prayers. In mid September 1986, as the anniversary of our exodus from the Philippines drew near, I began to get restless, melancholy, and depressed. God knew this and my second Sunday school lesson was on the Israelites preparing to leave.

As I was preparing the lesson, again I sensed God trying to tell me something. "Yes, but Lord, I like where I am living and there is so much opportunity to minister for You." (I was living in a mobile home park with 100 trailers in it.) He said, "The time has come, it's time to move." And *that* Sunday night, after teaching that lesson in the morning, Dave said to me, "How soon can you be ready to move?" He had decided to turn his rent payments into property payments, and we would be moving five miles west, in the boonies (wilderness), with few neighbors. To get my mind off the past, God stirred up and put some action into my present. We sure have a great God doing great and marvelous things, and He can use hard times, difficult circumstances, pain, and impossibilities for good in the lives of those who love Him and seek to do His will whatever, whenever, and wherever He calls. □

Melodie is the wife of David E. Dean, a graduate of Moody Bible Institute, and former missionary to the Philippines. She is presently teaching a primary Sunday school class at the Live Oak Advent Christian church to help sharpen her skills.

Excerpts from Letters

Thank-yous for Christmas in October Gifts

"I want to thank all those who had a part in providing my Christmas in October gift. I shall use it in helping with my medical bills which seem to be always cropping up. It is what one should expect, I suppose, when 86 years old.

"I am happily situated at Dowling Park...God has been very good to me and I am happy that though I live alone, I have strength to do my own housework.

'I will sing to the Lord for He hath dealt bountifully with me,' Psalms 13:6."

Sincerely, Vesta Clothey

"Dear Friends of the Advent Christian group in USA and Canada, we sincerely thank you for the lovely Christmas in October gift. It came just as we were preparing to go to Gainesville for surgery on Alice's right eye. We are thankful to report that the lens implant was successful. I have 20-20 vision in that eye now. Join me in praising God for this miracle. The gift of money will help.

"We would like to encourage you with a Scripture verse, 'Just as the mountains surround and protect Jerusalem, so the Lord surrounds and protects His people,' Psalm 125:2 (L.B.). We love you all."

In Christ, David and Alice Osborne

"My real reason for writing is to thank everyone on behalf of the India Mission and Conference workers for the Christmas gift sent to them; and to thank you for the gift sent to me.

"The gifts for Conference workers were placed in envelopes and given out on salary day. In each envelope was a Christmas card, and on the envelope was printed that the enclosed gift was from the Advent Christian people of the USA."

Yours in Christ, Joy Hollis

"We send our heartfelt thanks to Advent Christians across the USA and Canada for their generous Christmas in October gift to us. After two years in the Philippines, we still hear regularly from folks we have never met as well as from those we know personally. It means a lot to us to know of people's support and concern. We earnestly believe it is in direct response to your prayer support that the work here continues to go steadily forward.

"We are proud to be serving our Savior in cooperation with the Advent Christian denomination!"

Yours co-workers for Jesus,
Frank, Judy, Danny, Timmy, and Letitia Jewett

"We received the check for Christmas in October and send this note of recognition and heartfelt thanks to all who took part in this generous expression of love.

"We are working on Christmas programs, especially the one for the Hilton Hotel Christmas Eve. We find that Japanese like to hear the Bible message in English. One girl who spent two years in England is coming to the hotel service every Sunday that she can. She says she can understand better about spiritual things when it's in English. The concept of one God is not clear in Japanese thinking.

"Have a blessed New Year."

Floyd, Musa, and Rebecca Powers

"Thank you so much for the Christmas in October gift. We so appreciate the people who make this generous gift possible each year. This special gift means a great deal to us, giving us the extra we can use in various ways. With everything so expensive here in Japan this is a real boost! And being remembered is a real encouragement.

"We need lots of miracles at Asukano Christian Church: land for building, husbands of the members to be saved, and new families coming to church."

Love and prayers, Austin and Dorothy Warriner

"Thank you for sending my Christmas check and please extend my sincere thanks to all who have contributed. This year, along with saving some in my IRA, I want to use part of it to go and meet Marion (Damon) in Singapore. We have never been anywhere like that together in all our years of travel back and forth.

"May all who have contributed be especially blessed from Him this year."

Sincerely, Barbara White

Missionary Profiles Available

New profiles of each of our Advent Christian career missionaries are available on request from the Department of World Missions, P.O. Box 23152, Charlotte, NC 28212.

Love in a Box?

Joy Bray

"I'm learning that people can hate a lot of television, hate their own viewing habits, hate what it does to them and their families, and still think it's bizarre that anybody wants to get rid of it," asserts Jerry Mander, former advertising executive.

"I would never let my children even come close to this thing," stated Vladimir Zworykin, disgusted Russian-born inventor of television on his 92nd birthday.

"I am opposed to putting garbage on television for the same reason I would oppose open sewers in our streets. It can be argued that what's in those sewers is 'natural' and 'normal' and 'everybody does it' and that it's 'not dirty.' But everywhere in the world where that sewage flows unconfined, it breeds disease," commented Paul Harvey, radio newscaster.

Love doesn't come in a box. Ladies usually like chocolates, but they prefer an evening with the one they love.

There is an electronic box in your home that seduces members of your household with "inside glimpses" of famous personalities, on-the-scene coverage of spectacular, sometimes gruesome, global events, and a parade of 24-hour programming that calls you to a godless world. This harmless-looking cube is comfortably welcomed in 90% of American homes. Let's face it. Most of us could not imagine life without TV. That, in inself, may symbolize how our love-hate relationship with the "tube" continues to dominate our lives, with no signs of diminishing.

For better or worse, television is here to stay. In a mere 30 years, North Americans, Europeans, Japanese, and millions of others have absorbed television's transforming presence as readily as a sponge soaks up water.

Used by permission from Design, *quarterly of the Wesleyan Women International, Summer 1986.*

Note to WHFMS program leaders: This is the *introduction* to an article that you will find to be a valuable supplementary resource for presenting the program in our Kit for 1987, "Keeping Our Homes Pure." The complete article was furnished in the February Leadership Packet and you may request it from your pastor. Also may I call your attention to the reprinted article in the program kit, "TV: Where the girls are good looking and good guys win," by Lloyd Billingsley.

Mission Prayer Partnership

March

19 **Pray** for those involved in planning the future of **Berkshire Christian College.**

20 **Pray** for our pastors in this busy Lenten season that God would give them inspiration and blessing.

21 **Pray** for **Floyd** and **Musa Powers** and their ministry in the Osaka area.

22 **Pray** for **Francis** and **Lynn Ssebikindu** in their growing outreach in the **Memphis** area.

23 **Pray** for **Bessie Smith** in her ministry of outreach with the Meredith, NH church and also on March 27, that God may bless her on this her birthday.

24 **Pray** for a special blessing for **Alice Brown** as she prepares to come home on furlough and especially today her birthday.

25 **Pray** for God's blessing and gift of wisdom for **David Northup,** the Executive Vice-president, especially on this his birthday.

26 **Pray** for the **Lay** children as they continue to adjust to **Japan** and particularly for Beth on this her birthday.

27 **Pray** for God's guidance as **Marion Damon** prepares to return to **India** and for a special blessing today, her birthday.

28 **Pray** for **Beryl Joy Hollis** and her growing ministry in the **Madras** area.

29 **Pray** for **Frank** and **Judy Jewett** that their San Vicente Fellowship will continue to grow rapidly.

30 **Pray** for **David Vignali** as he continues to learn the language and manages our financial affairs in the **Philippines.**

31 **Pray** for a real revival spirit in our churches.

April

1 **Pray** that the hungry of the world might be fed, both physically and spiritually.

2 **Pray** for **E.A. Akpan** and the developing

ministry of the **Nigerian Advent Christian Conference.**

3 **Pray** for **Austin** and **Dorothy Warriner** as they work with the Japanese churches and Bible Institute.

4 **Pray** that the Lord would lay a soul upon your heart, that you might witness and attempt to win for Him today.

5 **Pray** for the local WHFM Societies and their vital work among the ladies of our denomination.

6 **Pray** for **Thambusamy** and **Victoria Devairakkam** and their growing ministry in Kluang, **Malaysia.**

7 **Pray** that God would mightily use our chaplains in the armed services.

8 **Pray** for the many national pastors and their ministries today.

9 **Pray** for our national radio broadcast that many might be reached through it.

10 **Pray** that God would reach many of our young people for Him and His service.

11 **Pray** that the Lord of the harvest would thrust out more laborers into His harvest.

12 **Pray** for the ministry of Vernon Homes and especially for Rev. Larry Knowles, Administrator.

13 **Pray** for the **Jewett** children and their needs, especially for Letitia on this her birthday.

14 **Pray** for **Margaret Helms** as she continues her vital and inspirational deputational work.

15 **Pray** for **Steve** and **Ann Lay** and their various teaching ministries in **Japan.**

16 **Pray** for **Lucas** and **Beulah Devasahayam** and their ministry in **Selangor, Malaysia.**

17 **Praise** the Lord for the purchase of our salvation through Jesus' death upon the cross.

18 **Pray** for **Barbara White** as she continues to minister to a growing church in Kodaikanal.

Mission Directory

INDIA

Barbara White (January 14)
Box 17, Andivilla
Kodaikanal 624101
INDIA

Beryl Joy Hollis (December 16)
American Advent Mission
Velacheri, Madras 600 042
INDIA

JAPAN

Steven Lay (November 28)
Ann Lay (September 13)
Beth Lay (March 26, 1975)
Timothy Lay (June 18, 1977)
3-2-35 Asukano Minami
Ikoma Shi, 630-01
JAPAN

Austin Warriner (January 1)
Dorothy Warriner (January 18)
Japan Advent Christian Mission
3-37 Okayama Higashi 5 Chome
Shijonawate Shi
Osaka Fu 575
JAPAN

Floyd Powers (October 8)
Musa Powers (February 28)
Rebecca Powers (November 11, 1971)
1478 Shironomae
Mikage-Cho
Higashinada-Ku
Kobe 658
JAPAN

MALAYSIA

Thambusamy Devairakkam
Victoria Devairakkam
Advent Christian Church
3A, Jalan Sayang Housing Trust
86000 Kluang, Johor
MALAYSIA

Lucas Devasahayam
Beulah Devasahayam
A.C. Bethel Church
30, Taman Gembira
Post kod-42700
Banting, Selangor
MALAYSIA

PHILIPPINES

Frank Jewett (December 1)
Judy Jewett (January 29)
Danny Jewett (June 13, 1976)
Timmy Jewett (June 26, 1978)
Letitia Jewett (April 13, 1980)
P.O. Box 263
Cebu City 6401
PHILIPPINES

David Vignali (May 10)
P.O. Box 263
Cebu City 6401
PHILIPPINES

Alice Brown (March 24)
Box 223
Cagayan de Oro City 8401
PHILIPPINES

Howard Towne (May 5)
Anna May Towne (June 11)
Dansalan College Foundation
P.O. Box 5430
Iligan City 8801
PHILIPPINES

MEMPHIS MISSION

Francis Ssebikindu (May 13)
Lynne Ssebikindu (May 8)
Faith Nancy (September 28, 1982)
Ashley Grace (January 21, 1985)
2590 Faxon Ave.
Memphis, TN 38112

ON LEAVE

Bessie Smith (March 27)
Box 657, Waukewan Street
Meredith, NH 03253

ON FURLOUGH

Marion Damon (March 27)
c/o Mrs. Elbert Damon
209 Wendell Road
Miller's Falls, MA 01349

Margaret Helms (September 18)
3612 Brief Rd. E
Monroe, NC 28110

*The missionaries' birthdates follow their names.

Tough Side of Visions From pg. 17

bored all the while.
So we wad all our life up into one little roll,
And then we shoot the roll.
That's what life is for.
It is better to be a part of beauty for one instant
And then cease to exist,
Than to exist forever and never be a part of beauty.
Our attitude toward life is
Come easy, go easy.
We're like human beings used to be before they became too civilized to enjoy themselves."
And before I could argue him out of his philosophy,
He went and immolated himself on a patented cigar lighter.
I do not agree with him.
Myself, I would rather have half the happiness
And twice the longevity.

But at the same time,
I wished there was something I wanted,
As badly as he wanted to fry himself.[4]

Lesson three: *Until we give priority to the development of a relationship with a God who is greater than our problems, we will be frustrated to the point of inactivity.*

It's tough to stand our ground when we are eyeball to eyeball with the enemy and God is silent. Yet faith blossoms in the times when neither end of the tunnel can be seen from where we stand if our presuppositions about God are set in truth.

Os Guinness observes that "if our picture of God is wrong, then our whole presupposition of what it is possible for God to be or do is correspondingly altered. When the presuppositions are wrong, the picture is wrong. Faith is out of focus, God is not seen as he is, and in this field of badly focused vision, with its dangerous loss of clarity or completeness, doubt is encouraged to grow. Such doubts are directly the result of a faulty picture of God."[5]

We must demand of ourselves the discipline necessary to insure that our daily schedules contain enough blocked out time for the nourishment of our souls. No other relationship, job responsibility or ministry should be allowed to burglarize our day of the time we need to develop intimacy with God.

We can resign ourselves to failure because the pressure remains unrelenting, and the cost demands too great a sacrifice.

The record for the shortest major league baseball career probably belongs to a member of the old Brooklyn Dodgers, a pitcher named Harry Hartman. He was a gifted young ballplayer whose day of glory arrived in 1918 when he was called up from the minors to pitch against the Pittsburgh Pirates. This was the moment he'd dreamed about, the beginning of a great career, but his dreams began to fade when his first pitch was hit for a single. The next batter tripled. Rattled, he walked the next batter on four straight pitches, and when he did throw a strike to the next hitter, it went for a single. At that point, Hartman had enough. He headed for the showers, dressed, and walked out of the stadium to a naval recruiting office, where he enlisted. The next day, he was in a military uniform, never to be heard from in professional baseball again.[6]

The alternative to being associated with the Harry Hartmans of this world is to honestly confront reality, and make the bold, tough choices our vision demands.

I invite you to
"Rise up O men of God!
Have done with lesser things;
Give heart, and soul and mind and strength
To serve the King of Kings."

"Rise up O men of God!
The church for you doth wait
Her strength unequal to the task;
Rise up and make her great."

Wm. P. Merrill

□

Notes

[1]*The Holy Bible*, New International Version, ©New York International Bible Society: 1970, 1973, 1975, 1976, 1977, 1978. Published by the Zondervan Corporation, Grand Rapids, MI. Used by permission.

[2]Joseph Bayly, *Psalms of My Life*, (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 1969), p. 16.

[3]Ruth Harms Calkin, *Tell Me Again Lord, I Forget*, (Elgin, IL.: David C. Cook Publishing Co., 1974).

[4]Don Marquis, *The Lesson of the Moth*, (New York: Pushcart Press, 1976), pp. 167, 168.

[5]Os Guinness, *In Two Minds*, (Downers Grove, IL.: InterVarsity Press, 1976), pp. 87, 88.

[6]Wes Neal, *The Handbook on Athletic Perfection*, (Milford, MI.: Mott Media, 1981), p. 72

A graduate of Berkshire Christian College, Clayton Blackstone pastors the Advent Christian Church of New Hope in Lewiston, Idaho.

GOOD GIVING

This seal is our pledge that your gifts are used as you planned.

As a member of the Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability (ECFA), we follow high standards for fundraising . . . standards that help set us apart from other ministries.

ECFA is an alliance of more than 300 evangelical ministries dedicated to honest accounting, financial integrity, and good stewardship.

Thank you for your support of

Advent Christian General Conference

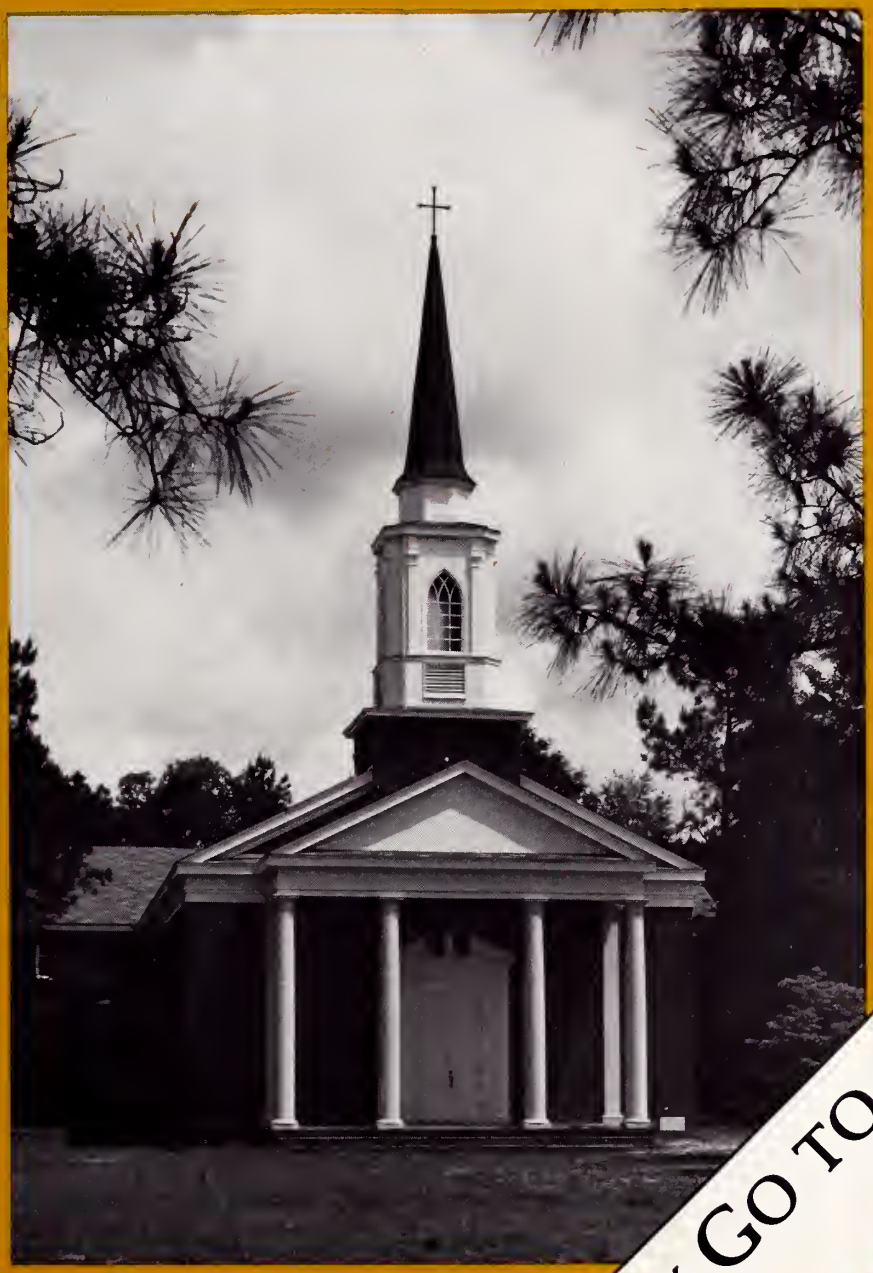
To learn more about ECFA, write:

Arthur C. Borden, President, Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability, P.O. Box 17511, Washington, DC 20041-0511, (703) 938-6006.

C 286:7
A2p

Advent Christian WITNESS

April, 1987



WHY GO TO CHURCH?

page four

Member
epa
Evangelical Press Association

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
Robert J. Mayer

MISSIONS
Harold Patterson

WHFMS
Caroline M. Michael

GRAPHIC ARTS
Linda Perault

TYPESETTING
Susan Gettis

EFMA
MEMBER MISSION

EVANGELICAL COUNCIL FOR FINANCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY
ECFA
MEMBER
The symbol of trust

Advent Christian Witness (ISSN 0741-4307) is published monthly except for a combined July-August issue, 11 times a year, by the Advent Christian General Conference of America, 14601 Albemarle Road, P.O. Box 23152, Charlotte, NC 28212. Postmaster: Send address changes to *Advent Christian Witness*, P.O. Box 23152, Charlotte, NC.

Policy: As the official publication of the Advent Christian General Conference of America, the *Advent Christian Witness* publishes the teachings of the Advent Christian Church and promotes the task of evangelism both in North America and throughout the world.

Rates in the U.S. and Canada: one year, $11.00. Single Copy, $1.00. Overseas one year, $14.00.

All articles and materials are copyright ©1987 by the Advent Christian General Conference unless otherwise indicated. Permission to reprint available upon request. The views expressed in this magazine are those of the author and may not necessarily reflect those of the editor or the Advent Christian General Conference.

from the editor

Lost?

This morning during worship, we read Jesus' final command to his disciples, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them...and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you" (Matthew 28:18-20).

Those words reminded me of the most awesome truth taught in the New Testament: Men and women who don't know Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord are lost and face eternal destruction. Jesus teaches, "I am the way, the truth, and the life and no one comes to the Father except through me."

That truth applies not only to folks halfway around the world; it applies to our relatives, our friends, those we work with, and those who live in our neighborhoods. People who don't know Jesus Christ are doomed to a death and destruction that's eternal in consequence.

That's why our Lord's command to make disciples is so crucial. Those of us who know Jesus are called to share God's good news by our words and deeds. The destiny of people around the world, especially people we know, depends on our faithfulness in obeying our Lord's command.

My Pastor, Mike Lupo, shared a significant thought about Christ's command, "Advent Christians have always believed God has revealed several precious doctrinal truths to them. If that's the case, why are we so hesitant to share the greatest truth of all, the love of Jesus Christ, with people who don't know him? Why is our denomination losing members and closing churches?

Advent Christian people and churches need to once again come to grips with what the Bible teaches about lostness. We've allowed many of our congregations to become more concerned about maintainence than ministry. While unbelievers die without knowing Christ and believers need teaching about Christian maturity, many of our concerns have focused on secondary issues.

God has a mission for the Advent Christian Church: To make disciples for Jesus Christ. God has entrusted to us the task of reaching lost men and women in our neighborhoods and communities with the Gospel. The future of our denomination depends on our faithfulness to what God has called us to. □

Volume 35 Number 4

Advent Christian WITNESS

April 1987

FEATURES

Why Go to Church G. Roger Schoenhals 4
How important is your attendance and participation in your local church. Roger discusses several ways the church can strengthen your life.

On-target Priorities for Fast-paced Living 8
Noted churchman Paul S. Rees shares his views on living the Christian life. Dr. Rees discusses the devotional life, prayer, and the importance of Christian fellowship.

The Perils of Procrastination Clayton Blackstone 10
In the fourth in a series on the book of Ezra, Pastor Blackstone looks at how procrastination can impair God's people in their lives to serve Jesus Christ.

ON THE COVER

The Grace Advent Christian Church in Walterboro, SC is pictured on the cover. Hebrews tells us to not forsake assembling together with other Christians for worship, study, and fellowship. This issue concentrates on the impact of the local church on Christian living.

DEPARTMENTS

From the Editor 2

Review 15

Women's Ministries 18

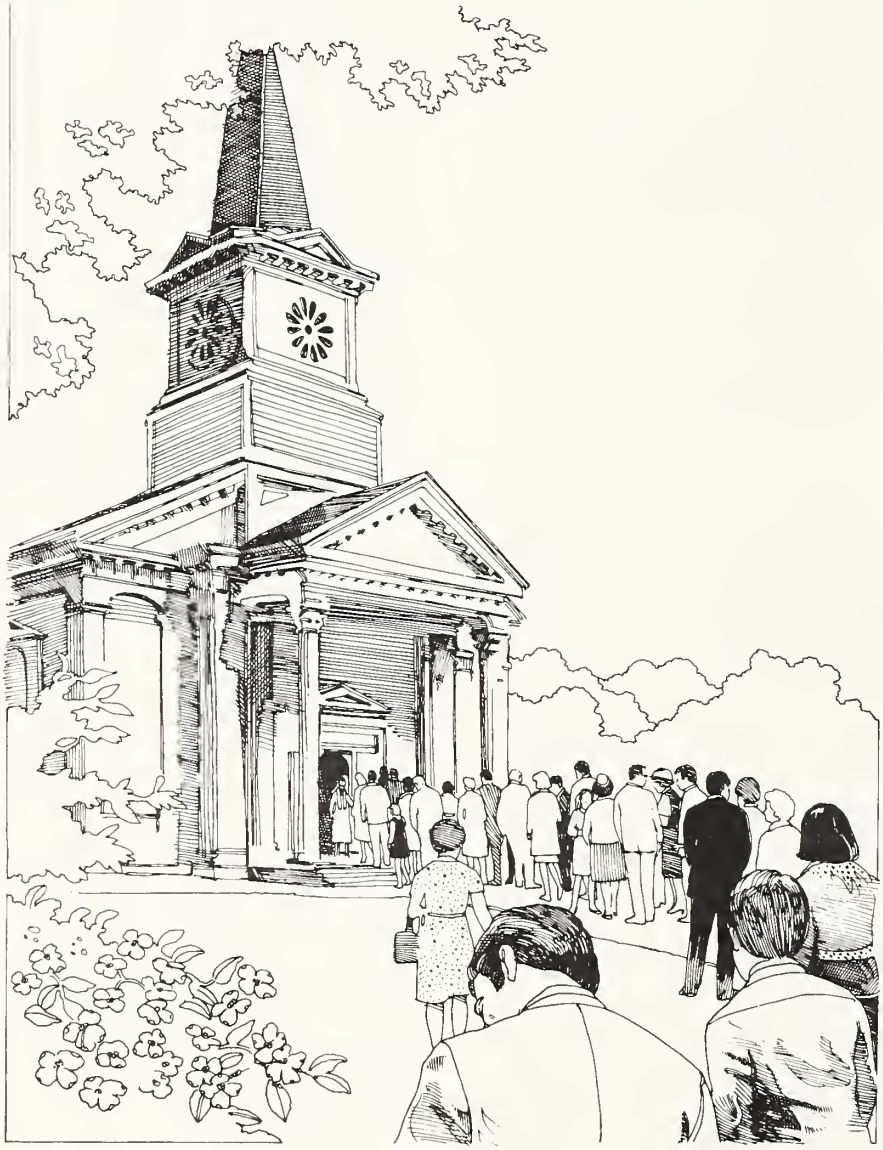
Prayer Partnership 21

Mission Directory 22

Opinion 23

Why Go To Church?

G. Roger Schoenhals



It's Sunday morning and a soft sunrise hints of a glorious day. You will not go to work today because it's your day off. You could spend the morning leisurely at home, or head outside for some recreation. Instead, you'll get up and go to church.

Why? Why would any person begin each Sunday in church? Why do *you* go to church?

As I've reflected on this question, several reasons stand out. They tell me that Christians need to be involved in the life and ministry of a local church.

Personal growth

We need the church because we need to place ourselves in a growth environment. We need teaching and preaching that stirs our hearts, expands our minds, and challenges us to greater commitment. We also need the example and advice of older believers who have walked many years with the Lord.

Moreover, the relationships of a church family help us live out the truth we receive. Commitment to a community of people helps us learn to deal with diversity of opinion and personality. We cannot grow on our own nearly as well as we can in the midst of fellow pilgrims who are

learning to love and forgive one another.

Giving our gifts

The Bible teaches that the Holy Spirit gives each of us a spiritual gift for ministry. These gifts are special abilities or inclinations that give us a unique role in the life of the church. Our gifts may relate to the music, teaching, cleaning, encouragement, administration, finances, discernment, evangelism, or something else. Exercising our gifts not only benefits others, it's a way of honoring God as a good steward of the gifts He has given us.

Someone has said, "What you don't use, you lose." This is true of those gifts and abilities given to us by the Lord of the Church. If we withhold our gifts, they may wither away. But using our gifts will polish them and make them even more useful to Christ and His Kingdom.

Receiving each others gifts

If others in the church are dependent upon our gifts, we are likewise dependent on theirs. The hand needs the foot, the eye, the neck, the arms, and all the rest of the body in order to be complete. In the same way, we need the gifts of others in the local church to complete what is lacking in our lives.

Helping us maintain balance

A healthy local church offers doctrinal balance through the well-rounded teaching and preaching of God's Word. This not only helps to insure a more complete understanding of truth, it also protects us from the false winds of doctrine that circulate in society. Whatever may be its faults, the institutional church has been God's way of preserving His Truth from generation to generation. Placing ourselves under the influence of a solid local church is a preventative decision that makes good sense.

Through the assortment of church ministries, we are continually reminded of the big picture of God's mission in this world. We face our responsibility to world evangelism through the missions program. We see the needs of the children, youth, and adults through the age level emphasis of the Christian education program. We hear of the social and spiritual needs of the community through the outreach and compassion ministries. All of this provides a balance of perspective that keeps us from narrowing our vision to a single mission or emphasis.

Belonging to others

We all want to be needed and appreciated. Local churches provide a network of relationships that can meet this need. Our church friends become an extended family of brothers and sisters, uncles and aunts, children and grandparents. There is something warming and affirming about coming to a church service or function and being welcomed by people who know us and care about us.

Being accountable

If we think no one is counting on us, it's easy to shift into neutral. But to have responsibility—to have people expecting things from us—places us under the kind of pressure that helps keep us in touch with the influences that promote spiritual health. Teaching a class or serving in some other capacity in a local church helps keep our lives from being overrun with lesser and more selfish involvements.

Strong witness

By regular involvement in the local church we communicate to our neighbors and members of our family that spiritual matters are important to us. Going on record in this way also helps us further establish our own commitment to Christ.

When we unite with a congregation of believers and fully participate in the mission and ministries of that church we affirm and encourage God's people.

Maintaining stability

As the waters of the sea vary, so do the circumstances and moods of life. Strong habits of attendance and participation

help us keep steady when the variations of life arise.

Of course, the order and structure of an institution can be viewed as wooden and restrictive. But a healthy institution can also be seen as a positive framework that provides needed stability in a helter-skelter world.

Feeling "at home"

As the people of God gather week after week in the same environment, associations and memories from the past come to life. Kneeling at an altar where we have knelt before reminds us of those precious times of confession, commitment, and intercession.

As we walk the familiar halls and sit in familiar rooms and mingle with familiar people we have a similar sensation as when we are in our own apartment or house. We feel at home.

Support

When the going gets tough and the bottom falls out, it's too late to run around and develop the kind of relationships that we need at a time like that. How much better to build those ties week after week with God's people. It's wonderful to know that we have the support of a network of believers who will pray for us and care for us when a crisis comes.

When the church gathers, the people bring with them the trials and triumphs of their lives. While we need to know about the difficulties in order to care and pray more effectively, we especially need the influence of the positive reports. It's encouraging to learn of answered prayer. Our faith is bolstered when we hear of how others have been delivered or strengthened by the Holy Spirit. Such reports represent a depository of God's marvelous faithfulness, patience, and miracle working power. We need to plug into that kind of news.

Worship and ministry

Isn't it great to join with other believers and sing praises to God! In the local church we have worship leaders, music ministries, and the preaching of God's Word to guide our thoughts and resolves. We experience a special sense of God's presence in corporate worship.

'We need the church because we need to place ourselves in a growth environment. We need teaching and preaching that stirs our hearts, expands our minds, and challenges us to greater commitment."

As participants in a local church, we are part of the ministry of each person in that church. Through personal care and prayer we can help them as they witness for Christ in their workaday worlds. The local church also lets us extend our influence around the world by supporting national church leaders, missionaries, and a host of church planting, educational, and other ministries. We need the church to help us fulfill the Great Commission to "go into all the world."

Strengthening our family

Those of us who are parents need to place our children in a setting where they will have positive models and receive supportive instruction. We want them to build friendships with other parents and children who share our values. The local church reinforces what we seek to instill at home.

Obeying God

While it is true that the Church of Jesus Christ transcends any denomination or institution; it is also true that in biblical times the church expressed itself in the form of local congregations. These local churches were structured with leadership levels and with practices such as regular giving, compassion ministries, instructional efforts, and fellowship activities.

In the beginning of Jesus' ministry we find Him calling individuals into community. For three years He spent the bulk of his time molding together the lives and commitments of twelve men. This band of disciples was organized with a common treasury, training sessions, ministry assignments, and a leadership structure that set Peter, James, and John in the forefront.

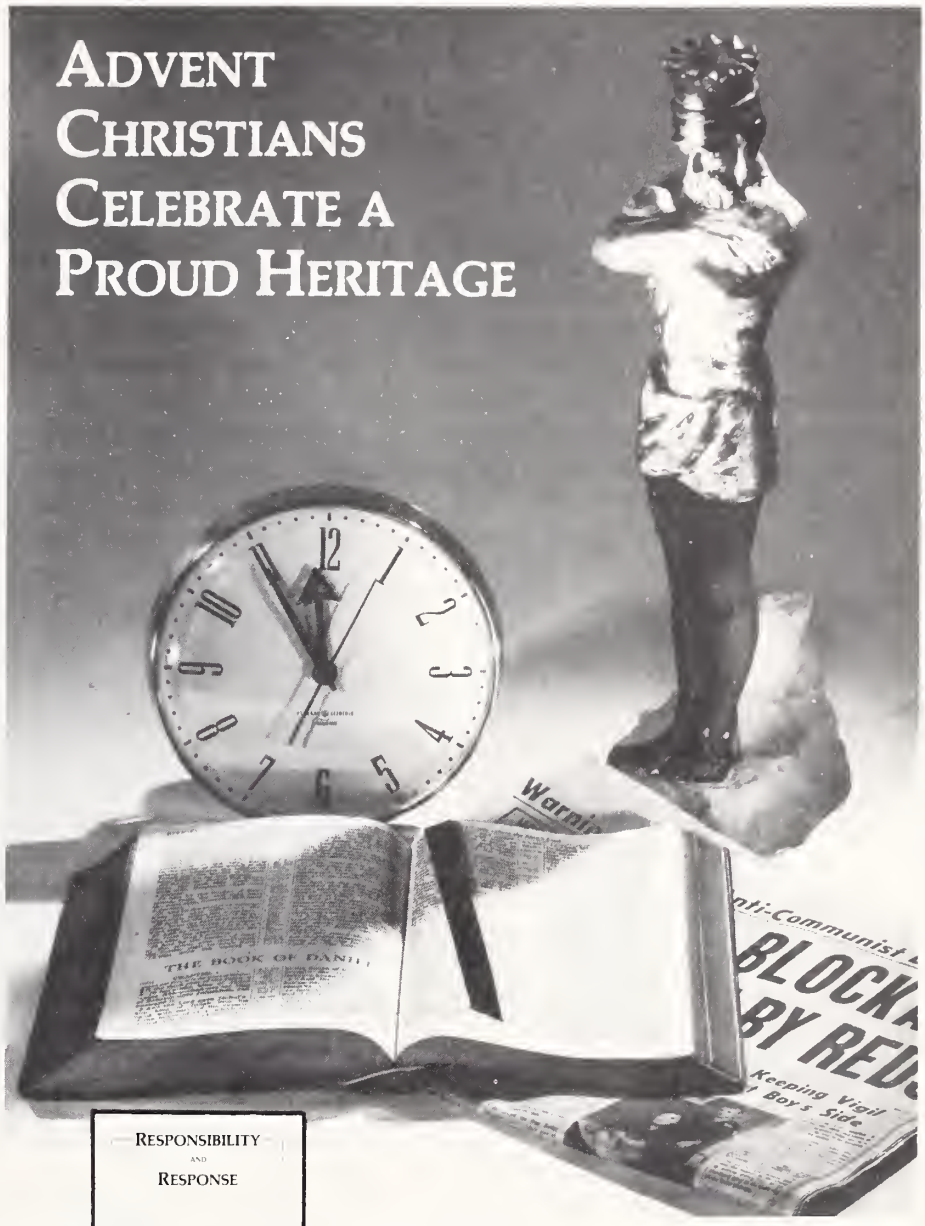
At Pentecost we see the Holy Spirit drawing people together to hear the Word preached and to

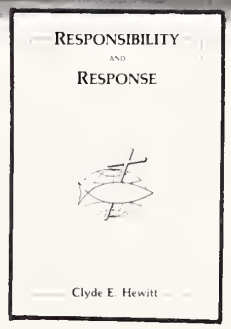
participate in corporate ministries. The Book of Acts documents the birth and organization of local churches throughout much of the ancient world. The letters of Paul address the needs and concerns of local churches.

The church is God's idea. There never has been and never will be a satisfactory substitute for it. The Holy Spirit continues to call persons into the life and work of the local church. How can we obey God and evade the local church?

God has given you and me the local church—a special place to worship and grow. We show our gratitude to Him by affirming our loyalty and support, and by giving ourselves to others who are partners with us in God's great work in the world. □

G. Roger Schoenhals is a freelance writer living in Seattle, Washington.





You can read about it in *Responsibility and Response*, Volume Two of the Advent Christian History Series.

Please send _____ copies of *Responsibility and Response* at $9.95 plus $1.25 postage for each copy.

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Responsibility and Response
Venture Bookstore
P.O. Box 23152 • Charlotte, NC 28212

An Interview with Paul S. Rees

On Target Priorities for Fast-Paced Living

Christians today face a complex world filled with many demands, decisions, and pressures. Often so much time and effort goes to coping with our fast-paced schedules, we find it difficult to give priority to the most important aspect of life: our personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

In the midst of our busy lives, how do we build our relationship with Christ? What devotional activities and priorities can strengthen our Christian lives and make us more effective people?

The Advent Christian Witness *asked David McCarthy, Pastor of the Aurora, Illinois, Advent Christian Church, to raise these questions with Dr. Paul Rees. Dr. Rees, noted Christian education, pastor, and author, has served the Church of Jesus Christ for over fifty years. Throughout his ministry, Dr. Rees has helped Christians discover the value of personal prayer and Bible reading as foundations for living. Pastor McCarthy conducted this interview when Dr. Rees came to the Aurora Advent Christian Church as a guest speaker.*

Dr. Paul Rees being interviewed by Aurora Advent Christian Church Pastor David McCarthy

Dr. Rees, do you see evidence that less personal prayer and Bible reading is occurring in Christian circles today, than say in the 1950's?

Yes, I think I do, although one is a little hesitant to make a judgment because one's experience may be limited. I do know that in certain evangelical circles where there is a long tradition of "the quiet time," there is today a very great lack.

Is there another side of the picture you find surprising?

I find that in some of the larger, historic denominations where there has been a fresh breath of life in the Holy Spirit, many people have come to a joyous realization of the importance of disciplined Bible reading and intercessory prayer. Circles often dismissed as being "dead" are now producing Christians marked by obvious richness in their devotional lives.

But overall, you find the picture in our North American churches to be disturbing.

I think my overall comment is that too many Christians have fallen victims to the stress of our times. One hears it said again and again, "I know I should pray

or spend time in the Word, but I just don't have time."

If our communion with the Lord and our nourishment of the inner life are as important as we believe they are, it isn't a question of whether I *have* time, but whether I will *take* time.

Having preached in many parts of the world, what are your observations about the devotional habits of Christians in developing nations?

It is my observation that to the extent Third World Christians are exposed to our Western technology and industrialization, there is a new sense of hurry and worry. I see a tendency to fall into the same patterns we see in North America.

On the other hand, to the extent that Third World people are less touched with our technology and lifestyle, there is a clear willingness to take time with one's Lord; to cultivate prayer and meditation.

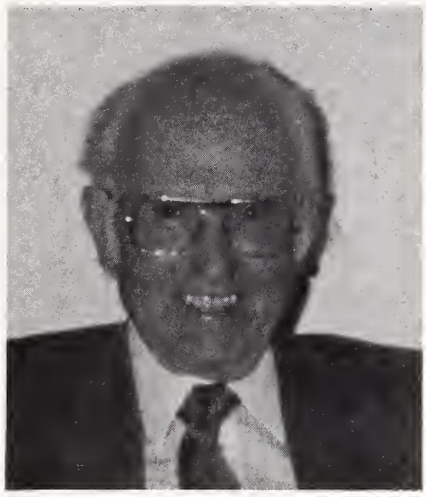
How may a pastor stimulate his people to seek a closer walk with God?

Surely this must begin with the pastor himself. The adage about some things being better *caught* than *taught* fits here. No matter how much a pastor says about a life of prayer and regular Bible reading, unless there is evidence that he is practicing these disciplines in his own life, he simply will not have the influence he would like to exercise. That is all-important. It is the habit, the posture, of the pastor himself that encourages the laity to seek a closer walk.

Once a minister is demonstrating a strong devotional life to his people, may he take practical steps to motivate them?

This could be an emphasis in his preaching and teaching. In addition, those reponsible for the church library or book table could make available books and booklets to promote the devotional life.

One tool that God has used extensively all over the world has been Scripture Union Daily Notes. These daily readings were first published in England many years ago and now are available in many languages. A unique characteristic of the notes is their reading cycle, which takes one through the Bible, not consecutively but in a carefully structured pattern.



Dr. Paul Rees

What advice would you offer to Christians who may never have observed a daily quiet time?

Scripture Union offers several kinds of study notes. One may subscribe to a series written for mature Christians who are familiar with the Bible, or a series for those just beginning to become acquainted with God's Word. I also recommend a pamphlet by my friend, Stephen Olford, entitled *Manna in the Morning*. Dr. Olford offers easily followed suggestions that steer a reader into setting aside some time during the day when he or she may be quiet before the Lord.

Men and women who have followed Christ for many years may experience a dry spell in the devotional life. What encouragement should we offer them?

First, a mature Christian will say, "This is to be expected." There is so much that is cyclical about the whole human experience—changes in the body and in our external circumstances—that one need not be unduly concerned when "dry times" occur. I have noticed a remarkable thing in Jesus' ministry. He would say, in effect, "I'm telling you this so that when it comes to pass you will remember that I put you on alert." So it is with emotional "lows" in the ongoing and maturing life of the Christian.

In addition, I commend a book titled *Spiritual Depression*, written by the late Dr. Martin Lloyd-Jones, a famous pastor in London. It's a gold-mine of

Continued on page 14

The Perils of Procrastination

Clayton Blackstone

Charles Schulz is one of my favorite observers of human behavior. Several years ago, he published a cartoon strip which I have installed in my Cartoon Hall of Fame. It occupies a space in my direct line of vision on those occasions when I lift my eyes from the books to stare blankly into space. Its moral reminds me of my fate on the Lord's Day if the disciplines of study and prayer are ignored.

The alarm calls Sally from slumber to somber reality. "I'm doomed!" she moans as she dresses and trudges to breakfast. She scratches out a report on George Washington while munching on a bowl of cereal.

Having assured her teacher that the project has been completed, she begins to read "This is my report on George Washington whose birthday we celebrate this week."

"George Washington wrote a famous 'Farewell Address'...He said 'So long! From now on, you're on your own!"

Although she appears genuinely surprised when she is corrected, she confesses to the girl sitting behind her that, "When you write a report before breakfast, your research tends to be a little skimpy."

We find ourselves strangely reassured by Sally's confession. The brilliant scholar shares the trait with the common student. People on all levels of the social and economic ladder do battle with it. Men and women suffer

equally from its effects. It shows no favoritism when it chooses the next victim. Procrastination stalks us all.

William Barclay writes of the tragic waste of human potential that results from lack of discipline in this area.

Samuel Taylor Coleridge is the supreme tragedy of indiscipline. Never did so great a mind produce so little. He left Cambridge University to join the army; he left the army because he could not rub down a horse; he returned to Oxford and left without a degree. He began a paper called The Watchman *which lived for ten numbers and then died. It has been said of him: "he lost himself in visions of work to be done, that always remained to be done. Coleridge had every poetic gift but one—the gift of sustained and concentrated effort." In his head and mind he had all kinds of books, as he said himself, "completed save for transcription. I am on the even of sending to the press two octavo volumes." But the books were never composed outside Coleridge's mind because he could not face the discipline of sitting down to write them out.*

Coleridge is not the only one to have "lost himself in visions of work to be done that always remained undone." (In fact, I started this series months ago. Only the pressure of an impending deadline drives me on!)

We all know what it is to sacrifice the necessary on the altar of the pleasurable. After all, shopping beats housework ...football games more exciting than "Honey-do" projects...the accumulation of new toys more immediately gratifying than investing in spiritual things that yield fewer instant results.

We know we're wrong. Still, we keep making the same choices until the discontent and guilt reach intolerable levels. The greatest of visions can be easily sidetracked as we vacillate in our willingness to make the necessary sacrifices or as other things jockey for our energy, resources, and attention. The result — procrastination strikes again!

Not only a 20th century problem

As we continue to dissect Ezra's account of the Temple's reconstruction, it is readily apparent that the trait is not a 20th century phenomenon.

The scribe passes over sixteen years without comment as he moves from the halting of the work under Artaxerxes to its fresh start during the second year of Darius. The writings of the prophet Haggai fill in the blanks.

A survey of those writings indicate that three factors contributed to the procrastination the exiles battled with. The slightest bit of reflection will yield the conclusion I reached...their struggle and ours are the same.

They were afraid of the opposition...and for good reason! The pressure was unrelenting. In a calculated effort to discourage the troops, the enemies of Israel kept tightening the screws. The scribe devoted an entire chapter (4) to an overview of a century of antagonism.

The opposition in the 1980s is different. We don't face the same degree of hostility. Many of our enemies are inside us. Things like our temper...a weight problem...lack of discipline... bitterness...jealousy...pride. We keep making attempts to defeat them, but we seem to get trounced every time. And the more the setbacks accumulate, the more difficult it is to muster up the courage to get back into the ring and go another round.

To avoid confrontation, we give a wide berth to the problem. We imagine that one morning we will wake to discover that the difficulty disappeared while she slept. But back to reality! It never does go away like that. Procrastination only prolongs the inevitable.

The patriots were also afraid of the unknown. The opposition showed a great deal of creativity in their efforts to produce discouragement. Because so many different things had confronted them, the fear of what might come next had a paralyzing effect.

The unknown often sends us cowering in terror so we opt for safe choices. We nodded in agreement as our brave spirits were one with Ronald McNair when he said, "Travel in space is something we must do." Yet in the wake of the Challenger disaster we shake our heads, wondering what possessed seven crew members to climb abroad the shuttle and head into the heavens on January 28, 1986.

Continued on next page

Helen Keller summed up her philosophy by proposing that "Life is either a daring adventure or it is nothing." We cannot escape the conviction of her words. Her zest for living in spite of her blindness confronts our excuse making.

Procrastination robs us of the exhilaration of giving life a thumbs up signal.

The children of the exile enjoyed the good life too much. The "good life" is not the brain child of a Madison Avenue advertising guru. It's the same curse that prompted Adam and Eve to desire to be like God. And it made action on Temple rebuilding tough sledding. People had become so complacent that confrontation proved to be necessary to get things back on track. Haggai and Zechariah called the group on the carpet for the priority they gave to personal comfort and economic prosperity.

Twenty-five centuries have done nothing to alter human behavior. We share their quest for things. We aspire to a life of ease and prosperity. Materialism wins out over godliness as the choice of a new generation. In fact, we evangelicals have conferred respectability on it all by embracing a theology that insists that a life of faith guarantees it. "Blab it and grab it" is in...the "cross" out in our pleasure loving times.

A sixteen year wait

Thanks to the dynamic leadership of Haggai and Zechariah the exiles finally launched a major assault on the project they delayed for sixteen years.

Now Haggai the prophet and Zechariah the prophet, a descendant of Iddo, prophesied to the Jews in Judah and Jerusalem in the name of God of Israel, who was over them. Then Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel and Jeshua son of Jozadak set to work to rebuild the house of God in Jerusalem. And the prophets of God were with them, helping them. Ezra 5:1, 2.

The team of Zechariah, Haggai, Zerubbabel, and Jeshua worked at motivating the troops for four years. Fortunately it wasn't their project alone. God watched over them and the elders joined them. It was co-operation at its best.

Politically it proved to be a good time to resume the effort. Darius had just assumed power. The kingdom seethed with revolt. The political instability allowed more freedom of movement within the provinces.

Materialism wins out over godliness as the choice of a new generation. "Blab it and grab it" is in...the cross out in our pleasure loving times.

Timing and a sense of team spirit among the leadership combined to insure the success of the project.

But beware...success does not mean freedom from headaches.

At that time Tattenai, governor of Trans-Euphrates, and Shethar-Bozenai and their associates went to them and asked, "Who authorized you to rebuild this Temple and restore this structure?" They also asked, "What are the names of the men constructing this building?" But the eye of the Lord was watching over the elders of the Jews, and they were not stopped until a report could go to Darius and his written reply received.

Ezra 5:3-5

The intervention came as it had in the past. This time the work kept on. Uncertain of how Darius would respond, the officials chose to allow the work to continue until he could pass judgment.

After a search for some documentation to put the project in historical context, Darius endorsed the rebuilding effort out of respect for Cyrus and because of the Persian tradition of encouraging the practice of native religious observances. In fact, he guaranteed the completion of the building by ordering that the purchase of the materials come from the tax revenues of the province.

He also boosted morale by issuing a stern warning to the enemies of Judah: Tamper with the House of God and you put your life and property at risk.

Twenty-one years after the foundation of the second Temple was laid, the exiles won round two of their battle with their enemies.

The dedication that followed could not hold a candle to Solomon's grandiose production. At the first, 22,000 oxen and 120,000 sheep were offered as a sacrifice to the *Lord.* This time around, the poverty strickened people could afford no more than 100 oxen and 600 sheep.

The kingless, hard pressed group was a pitiful remnant of the former glory. A different nation now stood before God. They were the talk of the nations then...and they knew it. On this day, they knew first hand of God's providence. He, and He

alone, had made this day possible.

The lack of sheep and oxen, the diminished glory of the Temple, and the lack of the visible presence of God failed to deter the commemoration of the long awaited event. The project had been delayed too long.

The years of procrastination were now only a memory. The vision that compelled them to leave Babylon and risk everything stood completed before them. Their work was concluded...or so they thought. It had really only begun, but more about that another time. For now, let's review and apply this passage to us.

Insight for our lives

We all share the desire to dawdle to some degree. The other day, as I snapped immediately at one of our children, I recalled the number of times that I had responded to their request for assistance with an "I'll be there in a minute!" I hung my head in shame.

The testimony of the exiles makes it possible for us to look on our condition with hope. They launched an assault against procrastination that resulted in triumph. Three insights emerge from Haggai's account of the events leading up to the completion of the project. Each grabs our attention and demands that we awake from our lethargy.

This is what the Lord Almighty says: "These people say, 'The time has not yet come for the Lord's house to be built."

Then the word of the Lord came through the prophet Haggai: "Is it a time for you yourselves to be living in your paneled houses, while this house remains a ruin?"

Now this is what the Lord Almighty says: "Give careful thought to your ways. You have planted much, but have harvested little. You eat, but never have enough. You drink, but never have your fill. You put on clothes, but are not warm. You earn wages, but only to put them in a purse with holes in it." This is what the Lord Almighty says: "Give careful thought to your ways. Go up into the mountains and bring down timber and build the house, so that I may take pleasure in it and be honored," says the Lord. "You expected much, but see, it turned out to be so little. What you brought home, I blew away. Why?" declares the Lord Almighty. "Because of my house, which remains a ruin, while each of you is busy with his own house. Therefore, because of you the heavens have withheld their dew and the earth its crops. I called for a drought on the fields and the mountains, on the grain, the new wine, the oil and whatever the ground produces, on men and cattle, and on the labor of your hands."

(Haggai 1:2-11)

If we're treading water as a denomination, spending great amounts of time, energy, and money perpetuating the organization, the time to renew our vision for kingdom ministry is now.

It had them all puzzled. The seeds planted in the spring produced nothing but an excuse of a crop. Food didn't taste good anymore. The wages should have been more than adequate, yet the only thing left at the end of the month were bills.

The Lord now lets them in on the rest of the story. The revelation translates uncomfortably well into a principle that cuts across the centuries. There's a good chance that *the internal frustration we feel is God's attempt to get our attention.*

As our Creator, He knows the grand purposes for which He created us. He observes our dawdling along, wasting time on the frivolous when our lives are to be testimonies of His remarkable ways.

The faddish ways of our culture attest to our frustration. We grab for one toy or experience after another. When the euphoria they produce proves temporary, we reach for something else. Solomon expressed our struggle with unbridled despair in the opening lines of Ecclesiastes. "Meaningless! Meaningless! Meaningless! Everything is meaningless!"

The emptiness we experience in the attainment of the trappings of success may be the beckoning of a gracious God, moving us in directions that best suit His design and Kingdom purposes.

The time is now!

Once He has our attention, we face the all important decision of when to act. Actually, for those of us who have devoted our lives to honing procrastination skills, the answer is not as complicated as we might wish. What you are about to read lacks the profound quality you might have hoped for, but here goes. When God has our attention,

Continued on next page

the time to begin is now.

If we're waiting for the right time to begin a relationship with the living Christ, it's time to quit stalling. If our problem manifests itself as we step on the scales in our bathroom, the time to begin diet and exercise is now. If our enemy is a bitter spirit, the time to forgive is now. If we've been waiting until we can better afford to give systematically to the building of God's kingdom, now is the time to begin. If we are treading water as a denomination, spending great amounts of time, energy, and money perpetuating the organization, the time to renew our vision for Kingdom ministry is now.

Nothing comes without some risk. Failure's aftertaste turns our stomachs. Yet the alternative is no more appetizing. Emerson wrote, "He has not learned the lesson of life who does not every day surmount a fear." There comes a time when "what if's" must be ignored and the task at hand begun.

Ronald Reagan, in his address to the nation on what has been called the eve of our national grief, reminded us that the tragic Challenger disaster is a "part of taking a chance and expanding our horizons. The future," he continued, "does not belong to the fainthearted. It belongs to the brave."

Winston Churchill offered the following assessment of his own checkered career. "Success is never final; failure is never fatal; it is the courage to continue that counts."

Once we recognize God's adjustment to our guidance system and begin on the corrected course, *the ease at which we complete our journey will be in direct proportion to the size of our support group.*

As a member of our support team, God is as interested in our weight loss and exerise program as He was to oversee the rebuilding of the Temple. He desires to deliver us from anger and bitterness in the same manner as He longed for the children of the exile to be free from the demoralizing effects of constant opposition. He eagerly uses a handful of willing people to implement significant change, just like He did centuries ago.

But we need more than God. And no, I'm not unspiritual! He designed His Body to function together, not apart. We were never intended to act in isolation. We all function best when we have people around us who share our dreams. During the week that followed the shuttle disaster, I gleaned new insight into the world of NASA. One commentator observed that although the astronauts do not always like each other, they are bonded together by a shared sense of mission.

Morton Dean, then anchor of the Independent News Network, observed that the "seven were a diverse group who shared a common goal—to see the world from a different perspective."

Like it or not, we need each other. Until we acknowledge that in practical as well as theoretical terms, we stand little chance of completing our God inspired mission.

Past failure often results in lethargy and procrastination, but it need not dictate the terms of the present or the future. □

On Target Priorities Continued from page 9

useful suggestions and encouragements for those who feel they are trapped in a spiritual desert.

I've referred to the book table. I think that every church's book table should include one or two things to help people who are going through times of stress in their lives.

Perhaps you would be willing to share your own devotional plan. Readers learn from observing a model.

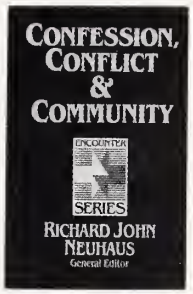
I don't follow a single method. Right now I am using William Barclay's book on Second Corinthians, which includes his own translation/paraphrase of the Epistle. While I find Barclay to be helpful, I would hasten to add that I don't endorse his ideas about universal salvation (that all humankind will eventually be saved).

In the past I have used various translations of the Bible, a denominational devotional guide, Scripture Union notes, and similar materials. I also keep a prayer list on which are the names of persons for whom I pray regularly.

Is there a parting word you would like to share with Christians living at the end of the Twentieth Century about their devotional time?

I would say that all present signs point to the increasing importance of managing our time; of getting our priorities straight so that we give ourselves to that which really merits our time. In my judgment, this will be an increasing test of how well put together our discipleship really is. □

Religion and Society: Exploring the Relationship



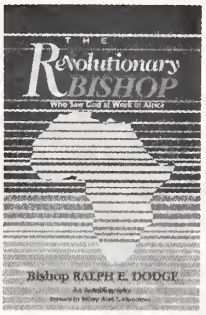
At a time when Christians of all persuasions are racing toward political involvement, there's great need for books that explore the proper relationship between church and state. **Confession, Conflict, and Community,** edited by Richard John Neuhaus, is just such a book. This book grows out of a conference sponsored by the Center on Religion and Society and explores how Christians in post World War 2 Germany contributed toward the reconstruction of West German society through "evangelical academies."

The academies were not simply schools. They were retreat centers where labor, business, government and other leaders could discuss problems and issues together in the context of a Christian environment and influence. Sociologist Peter Berger in an essay well worth the price of the book argues that American Christians have become too wrapped up in political pronouncements and in advocating specific programs. Besides alienating people who take a different position, that posture simply is not the mission of the church.

Based on the lesson of the "evangelical academies," Berger argues "that the church, by whatever institutional means are appropriate, mediates between the contesting social and political forces" in a society and "mediates to all of these its own perspective on the human condition."

The rest of the book revolves around this concept. A lively dialogue between 25 Christian scholars and leaders makes for interesting reading at the end. A good book for students of government and politics as well as Christians with a specific interest in Church-state issues.

Africa Adventure



"You are Bishop Dodge?" the small man inquired. "I'm from the Immigration Office.' "

"The little man came over and stood beside my desk. Taking some papers from his case, which he rested on the desk, he stated almost apologetically, 'I've been told to serve these deportation papers on you. You and Rev. Robert Hughes have been declared prohibited immigrants. Please sign here. The cost is one pound sterling.' "

Bishop Dodge thought, "What have I done to be expelled from Southern Rhodesia?"

This brief episode is the focus of Bishop Ralph Dodge's new autiobiography, **The Revoluntionary Bishop Who Saw God at Work in Africa** (William Carey Press). A regular contributor to the *Advent Christian Witness,* Ralph Dodge has penned a book describing his life and service to Christ as a United Methodist Bishop and missionary in southern Africa. This book chronicles Bishop Dodge's deep commitment to Jesus Christ and his determination to see Christian principles applied in a changing Africa. While the book focues on his African ministry, other important ministry and family events are shared.

If you enjoy reading biographies or are interested in missions, you'll find this book exciting and enjoyable. This reviewer also found it helpful for understanding African society and Christianity's impact on that continent. I'm glad that Bishop Dodge has included writing among his many activities during his retirement at the Advent Christian Village.

Understanding Power

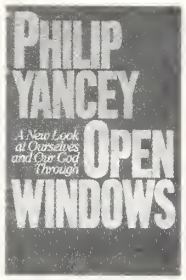
No Greater Power (Multonomah Press, $13.95) is an understanding new devotional book by the Chaplain of the United States Senate, Richard Halverson. Made up of 147 brief readings, this book examines God's wisdom and power in light of the pressures we face in daily living.

Dr. Halverson also explores God's character and purposes, the struggles our elected leaders face in shaping the American future, and the points where God's power operates differently than we might expect. Each devotional features a prayer offered by the author while opening daily sessions of the Senate during the last six years. Each reading also includes a passage of

Scripture and one big idea for the reader to focus on each day.

The author's forty years of pastoral experience make this book down to earth and rich in solid principles for Christian living. *No Greater Power* is especially suitable for men and women in business and other professions who grapple with applying our Lord's teaching in their work.

Variety



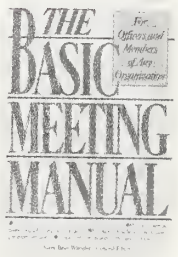
Open Windows (Thomas Nelson $6.95) is a collection of essays and interviews written by noted Christian author Philip Yancey covering a variety of subjects ranging from a Christian understanding of suffering to interviews with Christian leaders Francis Schaeffer and Paul Brand. There is an excellent chapter focusing on PTL's Jim and Tammy Bakker that explores ethical issues relating to Christian communication. Yancey has a remarkable ability to express himself through writing which moves *Open Windows* an enjoyable read.

American Views of Jesus

Public opinion polling measures everything from elections to fashion tastes. Now, pollsters are turning their attention to measuring American religious attitudes. **Who Do Americans Say That I Am** (George Gallup, Jr. and George O'Connell, Westminster $9.95) surveys public attitudes toward Jesus, the importance of his teaching in daily living, and involvement in the local church.

The results show, according to Robert Schuller, a "classic bad news-good news formulation." Christian teaching has influenced the vast majority of Americans. Yet that influence has not translated into commitment. The results are disturbing yet promising. In the last chapter, the authors suggest church leaders focus on helping people develop strong prayer, worship, and fellowship habits. A fascinating well-written book.

Conducting a Meeting



Working in a local church involves meetings. Being asked to lead or plan a meeting can be difficult especially if you have not done so before. **The Basic Meeting Manual** (Thomas Nelson, $15.95) provides a guide for organizing, conducting, planning, or speaking at any meeting. The book provides a guide to basic organizational structure and parlimentary procedure, public speaking, and specific speaking situations (leading the pledge of allegiance, introducing a speaker, presenting or receiving a gift or award, and a variety of situations).

Pastors, lay leaders, and members of civic organizations (Rotary, Kiwanis, and community agencies) will find *The Basic Meeting Manual* of great value.

Inspiration from John Wesley

Al Bryant adds another excellent devotional reader to his already long list of publications. Having already compiled devotional material from such men as Andrew Murray, F.B. Meyer, and Charles Haddon Spurgeon, Mr. Bryant now takes us into the mind of John Wesley as he confronted Scripture, and was confronted by Scripture. The result is **The John Wesley Reader** (Word Books 14.95).

The 276-page book is arranged in thirty-eight sections, each containing seven short readings. Each reading is one page or less in length. Each section revolves around one central theme, thus if the reader would plan to read one reading per day, he/she could focus attention on one topic each week for 38 weeks.

This Wesley Reader differs from other devotional readers in that it is intensely practical. To Wesley, being truly religious was more than simply getting right with God. It included taking positive action against such evils as war, poverty, and disease. When one spends time contemplating the readings found in this book he begins to come to grips with the Christian response to such evils today. This is not to say that one finds no theological reflection within these pages. Sections like "Christ and the New Birth" and "Of Law and Grace" challenge our

living out of doctrinal truth. In this day and age, when we evangelicals are rediscovering the necessity of living our theology in everyday terms, Wesley's insights are challenging and thought provoking. The two sections dealing with passages from the Sermon on the Mount, in the opinion of this reviewer, are precious.

Some people do not like reading devotional material. If this is you, do not buy this book. Others like devotional material which is heavy in theological reflection. If this is you, you may be disappointed here. If you like reading devotional material which is highly practical, challenging your very walk with God in everyday life, don't pass up *The John Wesley Reader*. It just may well be the second most important book you read this year!

Rex Watt is Pastor at the Ferndale, Washington Advent Christian Fellowship.

Tearing Down a False Image

Author Gayle D. Erwin uses Scripture as his knife in cutting through many of the practices of the modern church and its people in his newly released book *The Jesus Style*.

Erwin puts many of the practices common in churches of today under a magnifying glass and compares their style to the style of Jesus. The results are disturbing as he clearly points out that a number of today's church traditions are modeled after the example of the world rather than the example put forth by Christ.

Using his concise and definitive style of writing, Erwin introduces his readers to the true person of Jesus Christ as put forth in the Scriptures and tears down the image of an unapproachable Christ as presented by many of the churches of today. He shreds the popular pictures of Jesus as a strikingly handsome man and replaces it with that of a common man with no striking characteristics. Erwin's picture of Christ is based on Isaiah 53:2 which promised that Jesus would be an average man.

Erwin reveals Jesus as the truly humble Son of God that many have lost contact with. Those who have elevated Jesus to the position of a powerful leader are in for a shock in this book as they come to see him as the loving servant that he is.

The Jesus Style is a must for anyone in a leadership position in ministry and should be read by anyone who is considering going into the ministry. It would also make an excellent book for an adult discussion group or Sunday school class as it contains many debatable points such as competition in the church and church power struggles.

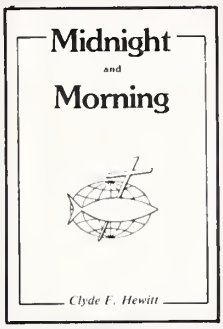
More Scripture references and research backing up some of his arguments would have been an improvement but, overall, *The Jesus Style* is a challenging work that is strongly recommended. □

Scott Linscott is the Director of Youth Ministries at the New Life Fellowship Advent Christian Church of Biddeford, Maine.

Midnight

and

Morning



A penetrating look at William Miller and the founding of the Advent Christian Church.

"A fascinating look at the history of the Millerite movement."

—Ministry

Available from:

Venture Bookstore
P.O. Box 23152
Charlotte, NC 28212

Please send _____ copies of Midnight and Morning at $8.95 each plus $1.25 for postage and handling.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____

Zip _____

Caroline Michael
Director

My Prayer Dimension

Gale Bailey

I have always been one to pray. Through the years I've struggled, however, to be consistent in my prayer life. It was always a battle and often I was guilty of the quick heavenward prayer, "Lord, help. Get me out of this mess." Or I went for days without any consistent discipline to renew my relationship with God. It wasn't that I didn't think about it; it was that I just didn't take the time to *do* it.

I look back on those times, not all too long ago, and wonder, "What was the turning point?" It was in February 1985 I began to work in a flower shop. I was feeling consumed by the church and its worries and concerns. I had only Christian friends and was questioning my responsibility to "go and make disciples." I needed a change, a break, from the routine of housework and church activities. I didn't, of course, forsake those responsibilities, but I added a new dimension of "being in the world."

It was then I began to pray, every *working* day. "Lord, may I be sensitive to others about me. Use me in some special way today for your glory." And you know, He did. I have wonderful testimonies of the special work He did through me and the influence I had on one of my fellow-workers. When she left the company, she said that I was the one who had influenced her most in her years there. Praise God. I was beginning to see how valuable my life could be as I gave it to God daily.

However, having developed a recurring back problem I had to give up my job and I wrestled with the thought, "Would I still feel a dependency upon God in my home that I would still seek Him daily?" Well, the answer is yes and no. I had discovered that my prayer life was much more consistent than it had ever been before, but Mondays (our day off) and the weekends were difficult. There were more people in the house. I had no space to be alone, without interruptions, and quiet.

Yet God was tugging, "I want more of you." I was feeling such a longing to know more of Him. In my journal dated October 17 I wrote:

"Precious Father, you again call me to a life of prayer — of intercession for this church and these hurting people. I see all about me busy, burned-out people. They're lonely because we have neglected you and each other.

"Lord, I feel the excitement of something good, but I also sense Satan's attack—discouragement, negative, impatient people; people of words, of talk, but not prayer. 'I cannot spend time with you,' we say, 'I'm too busy.' 'I have to work late.' 'I'm too tired.' Our strength and energy, our power and victory are only evident when we talk with you, when we draw deep from your living supply.

"Why don't we learn? How you must grieve. You freely give but we keep refusing to take. We are exhausted, worn, fragile, and weak. 'Spend time with me,' you say, 'I want to walk with you.' You invite us into your very presence. You tell us to come boldly so that we can find your grace and help in time of need. We must not sense we need you because we keep refusing to come.

"Lord, thank you, that you are quickening my heart to seek you. Thank you for your presence and those special words of comfort and peace to me. Lord, raise up others hungry for you; call others to pray. May we see wonderful evidences of your hand healing, saving, restoring our fellowship.

"May we see new faces, new workers. Challenge us again, Lord, to seek you and pray. Give us a core, and then multiply, spread out, sweep over our whole congregation that we may be a people of prayer and that our prayers and your answers will result in great revival and praise to you."

There are many "how to" books written. I do not want to add to that burden, but I have found some very helpful ways in which I feel I can commit "time" to God. I need a quiet place when all my family are gone from the home. I need to be fully dressed and ready for the day. Yes, I also need my beds made and breakfast dishes done! And maybe even that first load of wash on its way.

I then can say willingly, "Lord, this now is your time. I wait expectantly for you to teach me from your Word today."

I have been studying the Gospels, just completing the book of John. I

Continued on page 21

Shelly Warren, National Superintendent
7752 SE Harrison, Milwaukie, OR 97222

Heart Surgery?

A five-year old girl heard the gospel message, and for the first time she realized a response was called for in her life. Listening carefully, she heard that she needed to raise her hand if she wanted Jesus to live in her heart. Immediately her hand was in the air. Then heads were bowed and a prayer was prayed. Everyone was dismissed except those who had raised their hands.

As the little girl looked around, she saw about five curtained areas where children were going, one at a time, to accept Jesus into their hearts. Great sobs were heard as the little girl sat with head bowed and tears streaming down her face.

At last it was her turn to enter the curtained area. Her feet appeared to be moving slowly and her eyes were wide open with a frightened expression. Several minutes passed before she reappeared. This time a smile and a look of relief were on her face.

I know exactly what that little girl was thinking because I was that little girl. As I saw children entering the curtained areas, I was sure that major heart surgery was taking place. How else could Jesus get into someone's heart? My sobs and tears were brought on by fear of what was going to happen in that hidden area, although the counselors probably thought I was the most repentant child they had ever seen.

It was years later after many lessons from diligent Sunday school teachers, as well as weekly Milow meetings led by an elderly woman in our church (whose example of Christ's love remains in my mind to

this day) and a Mom who loved the Lord, that I accepted Jesus as my Savior and Lord.

From this one example it becomes evident that words are not the only tool used to lead children to the Lord. The positive role model of an adult in a young life is a powerful influence. This influence may be the difference between a strong leader in your church in twenty years or someone who "used to come."

More children today than ever before are being raised in single parent families. As we see the breakdown of the traditional family unit, strong family life is eroding and the Church now more than ever needs to be ministering to children.

As your National King's Jewels Superintendent, I see a correlation between children's ministry in your church and your church's growth. Individual growth will take place in the lives of the children as they are taught the things of God.

Each Sunday morning as I teach the Nursery Sunday school class of two and three-year olds, I marvel at a God who created such unique beings while giving them each a common need to be loved. I see these young lives beginning to develop concepts about God and I can see the great potential that exists in each young child.

From these lives will come the leadership for tomorrow's church. The potential for numerical growth cannot be overlooked. Children are people and a whole network of relationships is tied to them. Children have moms, dads, sisters, brothers, aunts, uncles, cousins, and playmates. A whole new mission field will open up for your church as this network is tapped.

My prayer is that after reading this article, those of you involved in a children's ministry may be encouraged while those who are not, will be challenged to begin a ministry with children. The potential that Advent Christian churches have to see lives changed is great. The reality of the changed lives depends upon you! □

Michele Ann (Shelly) Warren lives in Milwaukie, Oregon with her husband Sam and their two preschool sons, Jared and Darrick. Michele is a registered nurse and is employed at Kaiser Sunnyside Medical Center in Clackamas, Oregon. Sam is the pastor of the Thompson Road Bible Fellowship, our Advent Christian Church in Milwaukie.

Program Plans for 1988 - 1989

Who? The WHFMS program committee includes representatives from at least three regions, who are appointed by the regional presidents on a rotating basis, and usually includes the national vice-president. These ladies meet in Charlotte with the Director of Women's Ministries.

Pictured below is the current program committee: Caroline Michael, Director of Women's Ministries; Leigh Worley, Smoaks, SC; Catherine Story, South Paris, ME; Joyce Mays, National Vice-president; and Sue Pleasants, Seattle, WA.

What? More than 160 hours of strenuous work was invested in the planning of the program themes and topics for the next two years during the three days these five ladies were in Charlotte together. That is just the beginning of the work that culminates in the program kits produced each year for our women's groups.

Results? Leigh Worley will be serving as program chairman for the 1988 program kit which will utilize the theme, "Mastering Life with the Master." "Let Your Life Sing" is the theme for 1989 with Sue Pleasants as program chairman.

Seventy-first Convention

The University of Charleston located on the Kanawha River will be the setting for the 71st National WHFMS Convention on June 20, 1987. There will be a complete program for all women from 9 a.m. until 3 p.m. beginning with devotions led by Philippine missionary Margaret Helms of Monroe, NC.

A special feature will be the Salad Buffet at 12:15 p.m. followed by a challenging presentation by Barbara Deverick, Administrative Manager for Blue Ridge Electric Membership Corporation of Lenoir, NC.

The cost of the salad buffet is $7. If one is purchasing a meal ticket for the General Conference session, there will be an additional charge of $3 for this buffet. The meals are by reservation only. It is essential that you mail in your paid reservation for this salad buffet before June 1, 1987. The coupon below is for your convenience.

. . . . . .

I wish to make _____ reservation(s) for the salad buffet.

_____I will be purchasing a General Conference meal ticket. I am enclosing $3 for my buffet ticket.

_____I (we) will be coming for the buffet only. Enclosed is $7 for each buffet ticket.

Name: _____

Address: _____

_____

Mail coupon and check to: Mrs. Judy Tidwell; 1002 Grove Ave. SW, Lenoir, NC 28645 before June 1, 1987.

Trained Resource Person Update

An ambitious program to develop trained resource persons throughout our denomination began last spring. These training events for women's ministries are held at the regional level. Four events have been held for three regions with a total of fifty women becoming Trained Resource Persons (TRPS).

Spring Events: March 19-21 at Seattle, WA
April 9-11 at Princeton, WV

Progress: Over 35 requests for TRPs to present one of our workshops are being processed during the first few months of this year.
TRPs are being utilized in the Central, Eastern, and Southern Regions.
Enthusiastic reports are coming in from groups already serviced.

TRPs do more than present a two-hour workshop. They are assigned as an encourager for a particular local(s) and continue their contacts over a 2-year period. If you haven't yet requested the services of a TRP, you may use the coupon in the first folder of your 1987 program kit. We'll be happy to assign a TRP to work with your women.

 Cont. from page 18

usually read one chapter. One verse or two captures my attention so I dwell on those thoughts often turning the verses into a personal prayer or confession. I offer praise to God from those same verses before concentrating on specific prayer for church people, family members, physical need, etc. I have also started to keep a journal. I don't write in it every day, but at times I don't feel I can leave my quiet place without writing down thoughts and insights usually taken from this study time.

This has become a very precious time for me. I'm learning once again to pray in a more consistent and effective way. I'm discovering, too, that God counts me special and that I have a significant role in my witness in the world for Him through my own consistency in prayer. □

Gale is a graduate of Berkshire Christian College, clerk of the Eastern Region, and active in her church. Special interests include sewing, quilting, and interior decorating. She works in a flower shop "on call." Gale is the wife of Dr. Gary Bailey, pastor of Emmanuel Advent Christian Church, Rochester, NH and they have two daughters.

Follow in His Footsteps

Follow in His footsteps,
Be protected by His wings.
Hear the sweet and lovely words
Of the song the angel sings.

When Jesus died upon the wooden cross,
No one thought of what was gained:
The chance of everlasting life
For those who still remained.

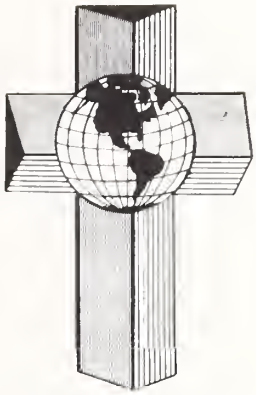
The Lord will watch over us
And protect us day and night.
He loves us all so very much
And hopes we'll see the light.

For God's love is always with us,
He protects us day by day.
We should follow in His footsteps
Because He's the only way.

—Beth Berry

Beth is a sixteen-year old from Marengo, Ohio.

Mission Prayer Partnership



April

19 **Praise** God for a risen, living and coming Lord!

20 **Praise** the Lord for the rapidly growing church in Palani, India.

21 **Praise** the Lord for the many decisions in **India** and **Malaysia** already this year.

22 **Pray** for the Regional Superintendents that the Lord will sustain them in the demanding work that they do.

23 **Pray** for **Floyd** and **Musa Powers** as they assist the Japanese Advent Christian Churches.

24 **Pray** for **Francis** and **Lyne Ssebikindu** in Memphis as they conduct many outreach ministries for Christ.

25 **Pray** for **Bessie Smith** as she works with the growing Sunday School in Calvary Bible Church in Meredith, NH.

26 **Pray** for **Lucas Devasahayam** in the loss of his mother earlier this year. May the Lord grant him great comfort and peace.

27 **Pray** for **Marion Damon** as she plans for the future work of the mission in India.

28 **Pray** for **Frank** and **Judy Jewett** as they continue to see fruit in their San Vicente Fellowship in Cebu.

29 **Pray** for our many teenagers as they prepare themselves to work with **Teen Missions** this year.

30 **Pray** for wisdom as we seek new fields to open for the Lord.

May

1 **Pray** for World Mission Director, **Harold Patterson,** as he conducts missionary conferences.

2 **Pray** for the work in **Nigeria** as E.K. Akpan and others seek to expand our ministry there.

3 **Pray** for **Dorothy** and **Austin Warriner** as they seek to win precious souls in **Japan** for Him.

4 **Pray** for **Bob Mayer** and our vital publishing ministry. May God especially bless him on this his birthday.

5 **Pray** for **Howard** and **Anna May Towne** as they

come home for furlough, especially to bless **Howard** on this his birthday.

6 **Pray** for **Beryl Joy Hollis** as she conducts daily vacation Bible schools in the Madras area of India.

7 **Pray** for **Alice Brown** as she prepares to come home after completing a busy year at Oro Bible College.

8 **Pray** for **Thambusamy** and **Victoria Devairakkam** that God will continue to bless their growing ministry in **Malaysia.**

9 **Pray** for **Margaret Helms** and her busy deputation schedule.

10 **Praise** the Lord for **Dave Vignali**'s willingness to serve God in the **Philippines** using his abilities in math to serve as treasurer. **Pray** for a special blessing for **David** today, his birthday.

11 **Pray** for a vision for a growing **Urban Ministries** among our people.

12 **Pray** for **Steve** and **Ann Lay** as they continue to share the gospel in classes for the Japanese.

13 **Pray** for continuing watch care over our traveling **Directors** and **Missionaries.**

14 **Pray** for **Barbara White** and the rapidly growing church in Kodaikanal.

15 **Pray** for pastors working in a prison ministry.

16 **Pray** for the many young people we have studying for mission work.

17 **Pray** for an expanding **Hispanic** outreach by our people.

Mission Directory

INDIA

Barbara White (January 14)
Box 17, Andivilla
Kodaikanal 624101
INDIA

Beryl Joy Hollis (December 16)
American Advent Mission
Velacheri, Madras 600 042
INDIA

JAPAN

Steven Lay (November 28)
Ann Lay (September 13)
Beth Lay (March 26, 1975)
Timothy Lay (June 18, 1977)
3-2-35 Asukano Minami
Ikoma Shi, 630-01
JAPAN

Austin Warriner (January 1)
Dorothy Warriner (January 18)
Japan Advent Christian Mission
3-37 Okayama Higashi 5 Chome
Shijonawate Shi
Osaka Fu 575
JAPAN

Floyd Powers (October 8)
Musa Powers (February 28)
Rebecca Powers (November 11, 1971)
1478 Shironomae
Mikage-Cho
Higashinada-Ku
Kobe 658
JAPAN

MALAYSIA

Thambusamy Devairakkam
Victoria Devairakkam
Advent Christian Church
3A, Jalan Sayang Housing Trust
86000 Kluang, Johor
MALAYSIA

Lucas Devasahayam
Beulah Devasahayam
A.C. Bethel Church
30, Taman Gembira
Post kod-42700
Banting, Selangor
MALAYSIA

PHILIPPINES

Frank Jewett (December 1)
Judy Jewett (January 29)
Danny Jewett (June 13, 1976)
Timmy Jewett (June 26, 1978)
Letitia Jewett (April 13, 1980)
P.O. Box 263
Cebu City 6401
PHILIPPINES

David Vignali (May 10)
P.O. Box 263
Cebu City 6401
PHILIPPINES

Alice Brown (March 24)
Box 223
Cagayan de Oro City 8401
PHILIPPINES

Howard Towne (May 5)
Anna May Towne (June 11)
Dansalan College Foundation
P.O. Box 5430
Iligan City 8801
PHILIPPINES

MEMPHIS MISSION

Francis Ssebikindu (May 13)
Lyne Ssebikindu (May 8)
Faith Nancy (September 28, 1982)
Ashley Grace (January 21, 1985)
2590 Faxon Ave.
Memphis, TN 38112

ON LEAVE

Bessie Smith (March 27)
Box 657, Waukewan Street
Meredith, NH 03253

ON FURLOUGH

Marion Damon (March 27)
c/o Mrs. Elbert Damon
209 Wendell Road
Miller's Falls, MA 01349

Margaret Helms (September 18)
3612 Brief Rd. E
Monroe, NC 28110

*The missionaries' birthdates follow their names.

Come Home, Oral

Jerry Griffith

TV evangelist Oral Roberts recently created quite a stir when he declared on his weekly broadcast that God would take his life in March unless he raises $4.5 million. Roberts told followers, "I'm coming to you to talk to you in a way I've never shared with you. I'm the closest to God I've ever been, yet I'm under an almost unbearable burden. As I told you last March, 1986, God came to me and reminded me why He had us build Oral Roberts University, the medical school, the City of Faith, all of these things..."

Roberts went on to say that God told him, "I want you to turn the medical school around in one year, and raise the $8 million it takes. And He said if you don't do it, I'm going to call you home in one year."

When Roberts made his appeals on January 4 and 11, he needed $4.5 million in order to fund an $8 million scholarship program for his financially troubled medical school. The "give or I'll die" pleas drew immediate reaction. Some TV stations threatened to take Roberts' program, "Expect a Miracle," off the air unless he changed his tactics.

Newspaper columnists also chided Roberts. For example, Jim Klobuchar of the *Minneapolis Star and Tribute* wrote, "What this means, [Roberts] seems to be saying, is that God has been talked into a second mortgage or accepting some kind of balloon payment. It also means that...Roberts will modestly cloak himself in martyrdom while the Samaritans are dunned every week to raise $4.5 million to save him from the heavenly bazooka aimed at his head."

This, of course, is not the first time Roberts has come under criticism for outlandish statements. Three years ago he claimed God had chosen him to cure cancer and that those who failed to send money were aligning themselves on the side of the malignant killer. Roberts' critics have deemed such appeals as "graft" because so many viewers, especially the poor and elderly, are intimidated into sending money.

While Christians must be careful in judging the motives of others, Oral Roberts' appeals should cause thinking Christians at least to question his methods. Is this the way God operates? Does He sanction death threats as an inducement to religious commitment?

It is reasonable to believe that Oral Roberts University does provide a good education for its students and that the medical school does prepare students for worthwhile humanitarian service. Therefore it is also reasonable to expect these institutions to stand on their own merits. Let people support them because of the good they do, not because of emotional arm twisting in the name of God.

Oral Roberts, no doubt, will collect his $4.5 million before March. Just ten days after his first appeal, he had already received $1.6 million in cash and pledges. The question is not whether he will reach his goal. The question is at what price. For the sake of $4.5 million, gathered from the 1.4 million households that regularly tune in to Roberts' program, millions more will be turned off to Christianity altogether. In their minds, the negative stereotypes about Christianity will have been unnecessarily confirmed.

Regardless of how worthy the cause, unscrupulous fund raising always gives Christianity a bad name. Who can blame people for rejecting the Christian faith when many of its most visible figures spend more time raising money to keep their religious empires afloat than they do preaching the gospel?

The electronic media has given religious leaders tremendous power. It can be used either to exalt the name of Christ or to bring His name to ridicule. Unfortunately, it seems that far too many media preachers and their listeners have confused the American dream with the kingdom of God. They have forgotten that God does not dwell in temples made with hands. They have forgotten that success in God's work is not measured in terms of TV ratings, Christian amusement parks, glass cathedrals, or college campuses.

They have forgotten that institutions are necessary only as a means to an end, not an end in themselves. They have forgotten that people are more important than bricks. And they have forgotten their call to feed the flock of God, not fleece it by becoming too easily involved in projects that are not needed except in their own minds.

Paul's words in 2 Corinthians 2:17a should become the creed of every religious broadcaster: "Unlike so many, we do not peddle the word of God for profit." Until that happens, let the viewer beware of those who "by smooth talk and flattery...deceive the minds of naive people" (Romans 16:18b) and who "in their greed...will exploit you with stories they have made up" (2 Peter 2:3a).

It is ironic that in the 1960s certain theologians proclaimed that "God is dead." Now, in the materialism and commercialism of the seventies and eighties, one has to wonder if certain religious pitchmen, with their high-rise buildings and multistory monuments, haven't in their own way buried God standing up. To hear them tell it, God certainly seems powerless to act unless He first receives several million dollars.

And then again, perhaps Oral Roberts did hear the voice of God threaten to call him home. I know, if I were God, I'd be tempted to say, "Religious broadcasters, listen up! Cut the nonsense, or I'll recall the whole lot of you!" But who am I to speak for God? There are too many in front of me who already claim that privilege. □

Jerry Griffith is editor of the Bible Advocate, the magazine of the Church of God (Seventh-day). Used by permission from the Bible Advocate.

AC04343
University of North Carolina
Serials Dept Davis Library
080 A
Chapel Hill, NC 27514

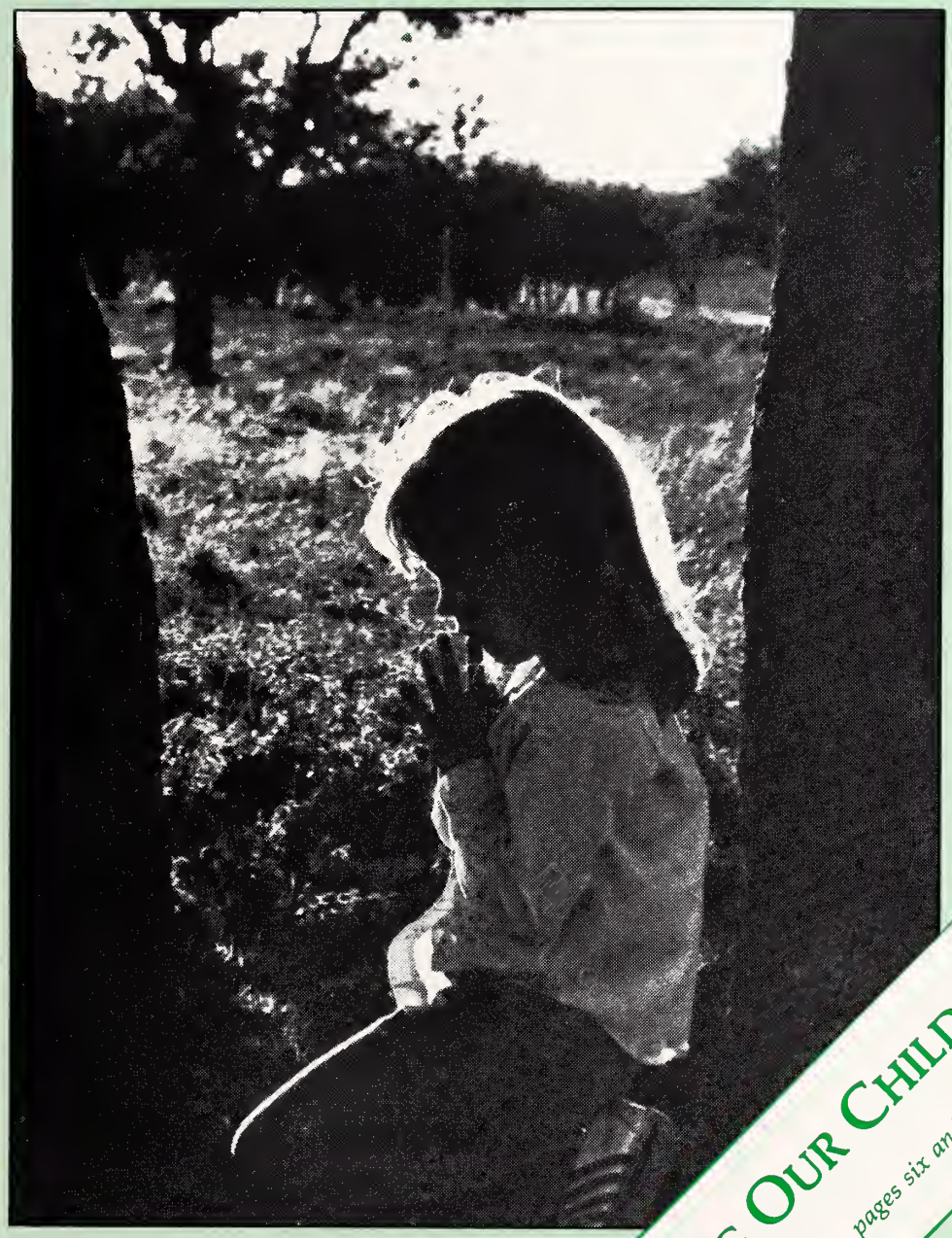
ADVENT CHRISTIAN
GENERAL CONFERENCE

P.O. Box 23152
14601 Albemarle Road
Charlotte, NC 28212

C286.7
A24

Advent Christian WITNESS

May 1987



TEACHING OUR CHILDREN TO PRAY

pages six and seven

Member
epa
Evangelical Press Association

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
Robert J. Mayer

MISSIONS
Harold Patterson

WHFMS
Caroline M. Michael

GRAPHIC ARTS
Linda Perault

TYPESETTING
Susan Gettis

MEMBER MISSION

EVANGELICAL COUNCIL FOR FINANCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY
ECFA
MEMBER
The symbol of trust

Advent Christian Witness (ISSN 0741-4307) is published monthly except for a combined July-August issue, 11 times a year, by the Advent Christian General Conference of America, 14601 Albemarle Road, P.O. Box 23152, Charlotte, NC 28212. Postmaster: Send address changes to *Advent Christian Witness*, P.O. Box 23152, Charlotte, NC.

Policy: As the official publication of the Advent Christian General Conference of America, the *Advent Christian Witness* publishes the teachings of the Advent Christian Church and promotes the task of evangelism both in North America and throughout the world.

Rates in the U.S. and Canada: one year, $11.00. Single Copy, $1.00. Overseas one year, $14.00.

All articles and materials are copyright ©1987 by the Advent Christian General Conference unless otherwise indicated. Permission to reprint available upon request. The views expressed in this magazine are those of the author and may not necessarily reflect those of the editor or the Advent Christian General Conference.

from the editor

Will America Be Judged?

For weeks, discussion about the recent series, *Amerika* flared across newspapers and television sets across the country. Liberals contended *Amerika* was mere propaganda designed to instill irrational fear of the Soviet Union. Conservatives argued the series didn't show the harsh reality communist occupation brings to a conquered nation. ABC laughed all the way to the bank!

Something that provokes this much controversy provides good reason for an editor to clear his schedule and devote seven nights to the TV tube. *Amerika* had its moments but its plot moved slowly and had the worst ending I've ever seen on television. But the backdrop; an occupied United States, closed borders, masses of refugees, and Soviet style "gulags" for political prisoners; sparked a question; "Is America subject to God's judgment?"

Missions Director Harold Patterson remarked to me, "Bob, God's judgment on us as individuals will come when Christ returns but the only way God can judge nations is within history." The great empires of Biblical history; Babylon, Assyria — even Rome; all were conquered. God even used a pagan empire to conquer and judge his chosen people for their sin and disobedience.

America is a nation of great ideals — freedom, liberty, the right of people to elect our government, the ability to freely worship and practice our Christian faith. But America struggles to live up to those ideals as well. For 300 years we relegated black Americans to slavery and second class citizenship. Today we continue the slaughter (and there's no better word for it) of over one million unborn children each year. And even more astonishing, both happened with the sanction of the United States Supreme Court!

This year we mark the 200th anniversary of the United States constitution. For all of us who love the United States and passionately believe in its ideals, it's time to ask some tough questions. Could our love of comfort and materialism; could our unwillingness to teach strong moral values to our young people; could growing economic uncertainties be signs of impending judgment? Will God judge America in history?

But God is also merciful and Scriptures promise in 2 Chronicles 7:14, "If my people who are called by my name will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and forgive their sin, and heal their land," should move each of us to prayer.

Will God judge America? I don't know. But as Christians we need to humble ourselves and ask God to be merciful on our land. □

Volume 35 Number 5

Advent Christian WITNESS

May 1987

FEATURES

Time is Running Out Harold Patterson 4
How much time do Advent Christians have left to do their part in fulfilling Christ's command to "make disciples?"

Bedtime Prayers Are Not Enough Evelyn Witter 6
Teaching our children to communicate with God through prayer is one of the most important responsibilities a parent has. Some practical ways you can help your children learn to pray.

The Pumpkin Seed Parable Clayton Blackstone 8
We get what we plant...don't we? In his continuing look at Ezra, Pastor Blackstone reminds us that right priorities yield satisfying fruit.

God's Servant in the Philippines an interview with Margaret Helms 12
Advent Christian missionary Margaret Helms reflects on her ministry and current events in the Philippines.

Difficult News Mark Collins 16
How do we react when tragedy strikes family or friends? Mark Collins shares his response to the break up of a friend's marriage.

God Can Use My Life Carol Chadwick 22
You have a testimony for Jesus Christ that he can use to bless and reach others.

ON THE COVER

Prayer is the key ingredient to effective Christian living. Two articles on pages six and seven look at ways we can teach children to communicate with God.

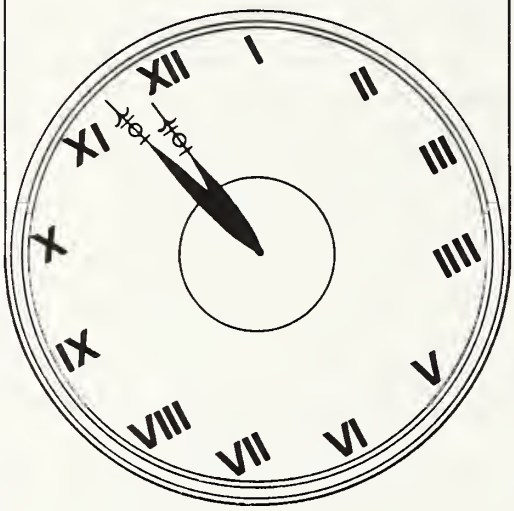
DEPARTMENTS

From the Editor 2
Review 18
Women's Ministries 22
Prayer Partnership 25
Mission Directory 26
Charles Colson 27

Time is Running Out

Harold Patterson

Have you ever sat and watched an hour glass in operation? It's much more fascinating than watching the second hand on your watch go around. One fact should immediately strike you: Time moves slowly, but persistently onward. Those tiny sands that go through the hour glass can never be replaced. If we were to use our "sanctified imaginations" we could see that the sand in the hour glass in God's great prophetic plan is running out. Time is slowly, but progressively running out on us.



Time is running out for the world

With the continued increase in the world's population and the decrease in farmable land, it would not take much of a change in climate to precipitate a much greater famine than we have now seen. One expert has offered this question, "What happens if you were to lock ten men in a room with only food enough for six?" History tells us that never has a nation stockpiled weapons without using those weapons. Will we someday face another great war?

The rapid defoliation of the world, particularly in the Amazon basin, will before long begin to affect the breathable air of our world. If experts are right, we face a greater epidemic than the great plague with the spread of AIDS. While all of these signs should cause us to "Look up for our redemption draweth nigh," it also means that hundreds of millions now living will never hear the gospel and be saved if we do not act quickly.

Time is running out for the world wide missionary effort

In 1974, Mission Advance Research and Communication Center (MARC) "identified thirty two countries which permitted no foreign missionaries of any type within their borders." By 1986, this list had grown to seventy seven countries now classified as "totally, extremely, highly, or moderately restricted in missionary access." By the year 2000, there will be at least seven more countries added to that list. It is projected that the population of those countries closed to missionary effort will total 4.3 billion people of which 3.6 billion will be non-Christians or 84.2% of the world's total.

With the rise of Islam and the spread of communism, missionary doors are continuing to close all over the world. Efforts in these countries will be restricted to "tent makers" with limited one on one evangelism taking place. We need to reach as many as possible of these countries with the gospel while the door is still open.

Time is running out for America's Urban missions

With the growth of our large cities already one black urban expert has said, "It is easier for a be saved in Africa than in our large cities." With the rapid influx of immigrants from "non Christian" countries, it is projected that one hundred years from now, Christianity will be a minority religion in the United States and in no sense will we be

able to call America "a Christian nation." We need to evangelize our cities and to reach the many ethnic groups that are coming into our land. Already, we see numbers of Moslem mosques and Hindu temples being erected in America.

Time is running out for Advent Christian Missions

One of the most sobering facts I face as World Missions Director, is the knowledge that within ten years, better than seventy five percent of our missionary staff will have retired and come home. We need to send out missionaries now to have them trained and experienced on the fields in which they are serving. We need to look at those doors of countries that are open and expand our missionary staff while there is still time.

Time is running out for our denomination

We need to continually start Advent Christian churches. With an average decline of nine percent per year, the Advent Christian Church, faces an alarming situation for the future. Does it bother you that the cults are growing more rapidly than the Advent Christian Church? Are you alarmed that there are over five times as many openly satanic worshippers in satanic churches than there are Advent Christians and that they are growing faster than we are? It should!

Time is running out for the lost

Every minute one hundred people die without Jesus Christ as Savior. A missionary was confronted by a national in a heathen country with these questions. "Was your father a Christian?" The missionary replied, "Yes." "Was your grandfather a Christian?" The missionary replied, "Yes." The national then asked, "Was your great grandfather a Christian?" "Yes," proudly said the missionary, "I come from a line of committed Christian people."

The elderly national leader said, "My father died without being a Christian. My grandfather died without hearing about Jesus Christ. My great grandfather died without hearing about your Christ." Then with tears in his eyes he said, "Why have you waited so long to come." Are millions dying today because of the disobedience of Christians?

Does it bother you that the cults are growing faster than the Advent Christian Church?

Time is running out for you and your life

Perhaps you are one of those who know that the Lord would have you to serve in some area of Christian service. You've kept saying, "Well, someday I'm going to do that." The reason you have delayed is that there are things you want to see accomplished first. May I remind you of the experience of Jesus as He called those to follow Him and one after another would say, "First I must" do this or that. They would never come to serve the Lord.

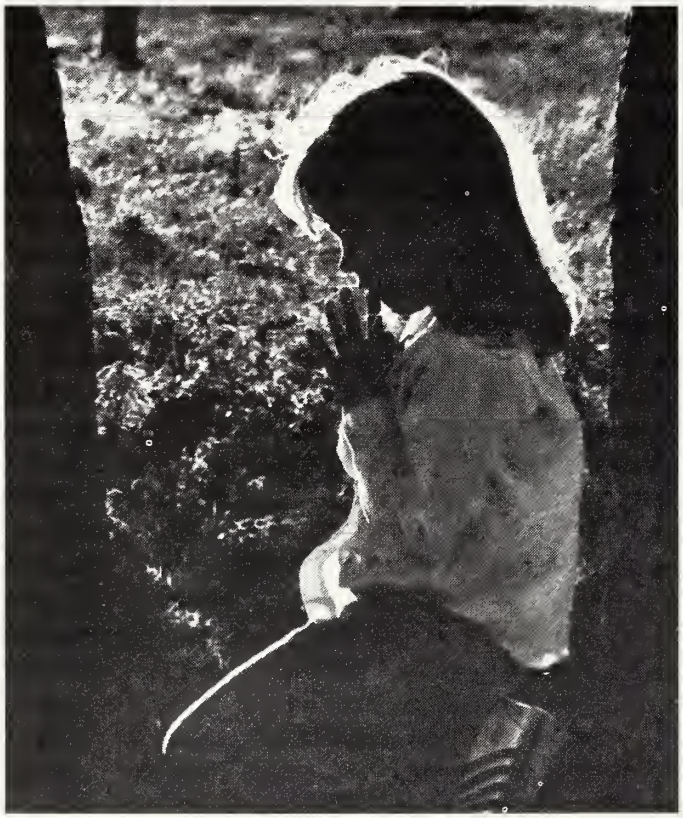
Someone once said "tomorrow" is the Devil's word while "today" is God's word. The Devil seldom says "Don't accept the Lord," or "Don't be a minister or a missionary." He simply says, "Don't do it now." The Bible says, "Now is the accepted time. Today is the day of salvation." Whether it is a decision to accept the Lord as Savior or a decision to serve Him wholeheartedly, there is no better time like the present time. The sands of time in the hour glass of your life are running out and there is going to be no way to put them back. I am reminded of a quote I heard years ago, "The saddest words ever penned were the words, it might have been."

While you were reading this article, over five hundred people died without Jesus Christ! Could you have been responsible for one of those? □

A graduate of Berkshire Christian College, Harold Patterson is Director of World Missions for the Advent Christian General Conference.

Bedtime Prayers Are Not Enough

Evelyn Witter



Learning to pray at a mother's knee is a most rewarding experience. It will last a lifetime of Christian thinking and will establish the practice of prayer deep within.

I have learned, with my two youngsters, that the best way to teach prayer is through actual situations. Real-life situations that come up in a child's life that have meaning for him are much more valuable as prayer teaching aids than any number of abstract words.

Teaching prayer in real life

For example, our six-year-old Louise came home from school one day dangling a jump rope behind her. We had not bought it for her.

"Where did you get the rope, dear?" I asked.

"I found it on the playground at school," she replied.

"What are you going to do with the rope you found, Louise?"

"Keep it. Finders keepers, losers weepers."

"How do you think the little girl who lost her rope feels?"

"Bad."

"We had better pray and ask God to help us to do the kind and right thing about the rope," I said. So I began.

"Dear Father, please help us to make the right decisions and always do what is fair and what is right. Amen."

Before Louise went to bed that night she told me she had decided to turn the rope over to Miss Adams, her teacher. She would ask Miss Adams to try to find the rightful owner, and if no one claims the rope after a time, she would ask Miss Adams to give it to her.

"Would you like to pray?"

At another time, when their grandmother died, both children were confused, worried and grief-stricken. When we returned home after the funeral, I knew of nothing that would help my children more than prayer. I said, "Would you like to pray?"

"Yes," they both answered, nodding.

We sat down. Jimmy folded his little hands in prayer, shut his eyes tight, and prayed. Louise followed his example and said a prayer of her own.

After that, tensions were lessened. The children missed Grandma, of course, but they had had the experience of the comfort of prayer and a strong renewal of their faith. They felt the security of the goodness of God, and the worries and griefs in their minds were noticeably lifted.

"You can pray for him"

Another prayer lesson came when Jimmy's favorite friend, Rodney, was stricken with polio. Rodney was taken to the isolation ward at the hospital, and the reports we heard about him were not encouraging.

"I wish I could do something to help Rodney," Jimmy said earnestly.

"You can," I told him. "You can pray for him."

Jimmy and I sat down that very minute, and I prayed aloud. "Dear Father in heaven, help Rodney to face his illness with courage and with faith in Thee, that he may be able to recover from his illness."

Jimmy prayed many times in the days that followed. Finally Rodney was back home. One leg was damaged from the ravages of the disease, and it was many months before he could walk about again—and then only with the aid of a walking stick. Jimmy thanked God often for Rodney's recovery.

Many situations can be used

There were, and still are, many

situations similar to the jumping rope, the death of someone near and dear, the severe illness of a friend, which offer concrete experiences in which prayer is vital and meaningful. This way prayer became a practice which was firmly established. Prayer, through meaningful situations, aided understanding of grace at mealtime and the prayers said at bedtime.

Very young children often need help in expressing their own thoughts. Sometimes if the parent will suggest a way to start a prayer, the children find it easier to go on.

In our family I often started the children by adapting some simple Scripture to an opening sentence.

"O God, who dost cause the grass to grow for the cattle" (from Psalm 104:14). This was good for my children because we are a farm family and my children appreciate the worth of that statement.

Or "A child is known by what he does" (Proverbs 20:11) forms a silent prayer beginning, "Dear Father, since I am known by what I do, help me to do better."

Or "It is good to give thanks to the Lord" (Psalm 92:1) is also a logical prayer beginning for the child. "Dear Father, I give thanks for all my blessings."

Sometimes a child can find his own words with which to pray if you suggest just a salutation beginning like "O God of love" or "Dear loving Lord." □

Evelyn Witter is a freelance writer living in Milan, Illinois.

Ten Ways to Help Children Get Into the Prayer Habit

Suzanne P. Campbell

1. Say a leading prayer with them: "Dear Jesus, thank you for...and let them finish. This is particularly effective for very young children or those who have not prayed often.

2. Appeal to their sense of wonder and the nearness of God by suggesting they close their eyes and listen carefully to what the Holy Spirit is saying in their hearts.

3. Ask them to think what the best thing about today was, or who they saw that seemed sad and might need a prayer said for them.

4. If they are troubled or afraid, have them close their eyes and imagine putting their problem in a big sack. Then suggest that they picture Jesus standing in back of a large table and motioning them to come to Him. They can then drag their sack to the table, leave it in His care and not have to carry the problems any longer.

5. Try a song prayer such as "Father We Thank Thee" or a scripture put to music like "Seek Ye First the kingdom of God and His righteousness.."

6. Teach the Lord's Prayer by saying one line and having them supply the next. It's a joint venture and not so overwhelming to a young child. Mine learned it this way when they were 2-3 years old.

7. Have them teach a favorite doll or stuffed animal to pray just as they do. You'll learn something about how they view your teaching techniques too!

8. Don't always leave prayers for meals and bedtime. Stop on a park bench during a walk and thank God for the beautiful world He has made. Or take their hands in yours and thank the Lord, out loud, for them when they have made a special effort. For that matter, thank the Lord for them because they *are*, because there's nobody else like them in the whole world, wet shoes, grubby faces, and all. (Try this on a day when you discover they've been keeping worms in the bedroom because it's too cold outside. It's wonderful for your spiritual development!).

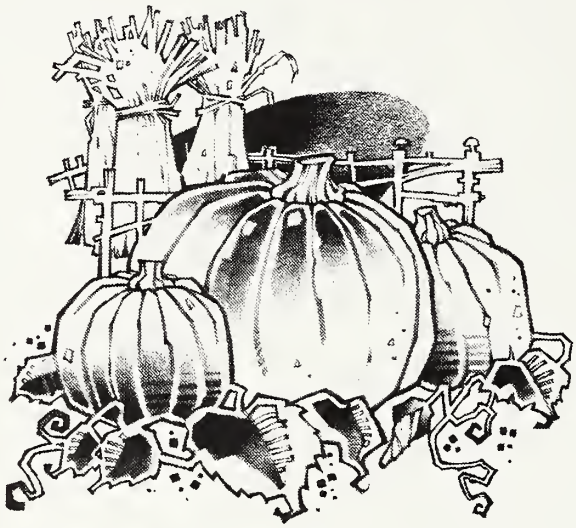
9. Have them draw a prayer picture to show what they are thankful for.

10. If anger is clouding their day (and yours) this activity will work wonders. Have them fill a glass or pretty, clear container with water to which you add instant coffee, cocoa, or anything else that's yucky colored. Then

Continued on page 21

The Pumpkin Seed Parable

Clayton Blackstone



I stared in disbelief at the pile of pumpkin in front of me.

My taste buds insist that fresh pumpkin is a must for great pies and muffins. For the pumpkin connoisseur, their bright, orange fruit possesses far greater worth than as a carved decoration for Halloween.

I planted conservatively in the spring, not wishing to have more than we could use. Based on past experience, two hills should have supplied our needs.

On the day that I harvested them, I gazed in amazement at the heap. We supplied everyone in our congregation with all they wanted, and our freezer remains overstocked with pumpkin waiting to find its way into some taste tempting recipe.

My peas, on the other hand, produced a yield that can best be described as catastrophic. Since peas are my favorite veggie, I fantasized for a miracle...long, well developed pea pods on pumpkin vines.

A pipe dream? Of course! Peas don't grow on pumpkin vines. We all know that we get what we plant...don't we?

We get what we plant

Well aware of the gardening principle, we sometimes forget that the same law applies to life.

The Preacher in Ecclesiastes concluded that the things that he thought would provide fulfillment failed the exam he gave them. He assigned them a grade of "Meaningless!"

His assessment lacks the optimism that we find so appealing, yet we know the hollow feeling. Intellectually embracing the power of positive thinking, we still struggle, at times, to discover the silver lining behind the clouds that color our lives a dark gray.

We are more like him than we care to admit. Pleasure, work, education, and acts of benevolence easily assume deity status. These gods have blessed our worship with little more than fleeting satisfaction and nagging frustration.

John Gardner observes in *Self Renewal* that "if happiness could be found in having material things, and in being able to indulge yourself in things that you consider pleasurable, then we, in America, would be deliriously happy. We would be telling one another frequently of our unparalleled bliss, rather than trading tranquilizer prescriptions."

When materialism becomes our god, we need not be surprised at the harvest of frustration that results. "The one who dies with the most toys wins" is a great line, but the fruit that it produces leaves our stomachs empty.

When knowledge is elevated to savior status, we discover only the futility of an educational system that teaches a great number of facts but few values that a life can be built on.

When pleasure becomes the goddess at whose throne we worship, our experience confirms the Preacher's observation: "It's all chasing after the wind."

"That wind," T.S. Elliot acknowledges, "will say:

"Here were a decent, godless people;
Their only monument
an asphalt road
and a thousand lost golf balls."

If we harvest only what we sow and are serious about transforming vision into reality, we must look our priorities squarely in the eye, and without flinching, reorder them.

A harvest of holiness

Let's be honest...most of the things that rob us of time and energy are sucker branches that need to be pruned.

The children of the exile returned to rebuild a Temple. Ezra arrived on the scene years later to remind them that their mission went far beyond construction of buildings. God planned for them to be a "holy nation and a kingdom of priests." Ezra's life and teaching called the Jewish people to enlarge the scope of their vision...to focus on the development of character and godliness.

God aims to produce a harvest of holiness in our lives. In the end that fruit will not be judged on the appearance of the garden that it was grown in...the award-winning architectural design of the root cellar it was stored in...the long list of hybrids after its name.

There are no short cuts to producing A-1 fruit. The results are in direct proportion to the quality of the seed planted and the care extended to the growing plants. Ezra illustrates my premise well. Two observations emerge from an overview of chapters seven and eight of the book that bears his name.

Ezra was a man who planted choice priorities, carefully selected from God's written revelation.

God's word served not only as a study guide for life, but as an operations manual as well. It sometimes ran counter to Ezra's own preferences... At other times it challenged his comfort level so he took the risk God called him to take.

This uncommon man *devoted* himself (7:10) to the study of the Law of the *Lord*. The word literally means that he directed all of his passion and energy toward the task of knowing God's law.

"A bit unpractical for us lay people." "Such a priority denies reality." I can hear the objections coming my way. "I've got a house payment to make and three kids in college. Financial survival takes precedence and God understands, right?"

A passion for God's word

Perhaps its time to face the consequences of our business. Ezra found time to spend in the Book because he wanted to. And his priorities grew out of his passion. His example cannot be ignored because he managed to produce dramatic changes in the values of a nation. The thing that claimed preeminence in his life demands a second look from evangelicals who maintain high visibility in our culture but have done little to affect its values.

This extraordinary man was not a professional student living in an ivory tower. Nor was he simply driven by a pursuit of knowledge for the sake of knowledge. He committed himself to integrating what he knew into life.

God's Word served not only as a study guide to life, but an operations manual as well. It sometimes ran counter to his own preferences so he rearranged the things to which he was partial. At other times it challenged his comfort level so he took the risk God called him to take.

I know...we have a right to make our own choices. In fact, we demand the right to do so. But without the assistance of the Spirit of God who is alive in His Word, the decisions we make will usually be the wrong ones. And remember...we only harvest what we plant.

Like any successful gardener,

Ezra anxiously worked to share his findings with others. This desire to see a harvest of righteousness in people drew the man away from the comfort and security of Babylon to the fatherland of Judah.

Fifty-seven years had lapsed since the completion of the Temple. God wasn't finished with His people. No one knew that better than the one the Jewish people call the second Moses. The Temple's importance must not be ignored, yet it dimmed in comparison to the individual temples God wished to raise as holy dwellings for Himself.

Ezra reaps God's provisions

Ezra's number one priority: to see God's Word produce change in people's lives. It drew him away from the safe and the easy. It challenged him to risk everything. It left him stranded on omnipotence.

Because the priorities were in order, *Ezra harvested the provision of God's blessing and protection.*

His name means "One whom God helps." His experiences confirm the promise. Five times in two chapters we bump into "And the hand of our God was upon us."

Even Artaxerxes' response affirmed the completeness of the *Lord's* provision. The scribe received everything he requested:

- permission for all who desired to return to Jerusalem to insure proper observance of divine law
- a grant to pay for the cost of the necessary sacrifices
- authorization to insure that no temple officials would be taxed
- permission to establish a judicial system with authority to execute its judgment. (see Ezra 7:12-26)

The doxology which concludes chapter seven expresses Ezra's appreciation for the provisions of grace. "Praise be to the *Lord*, the God of our fathers, who has put it in the king's heart to bring honor to the house of the *Lord* in Jerusalem in this way and who has extended his good favor to me before the king and his advisers and all the king's powerful officials."

As we move along in the narrative another evidence of God's favor comes to light. The journey of nearly a thousand miles presented a genuine challenge. The band would be easy prey for bandits who earned their livelihood taking from unprotected, traveling citizens of the empire.

Our hero found himself in a Catch 22. He placed great emphasis on the protecting power of God when he presented his case to the king. He could not, without looking foolish, now ask for soldiers and horsemen to protect them from enemies along the way.

In the end, faith won out over fear. The three month trek proved as uneventful as a jaunt across town. People and treasure arrived in good condition. God honored Ezra's priorities with His blessing and protection.

Right priorities yield good fruit

No one can guarantee us a disease free, trouble free pilgrimage on Planet Earth. Allowing God's Word to guide us does not insure the realization of our dreams or the satisfaction of all our whims.

But make no mistake...right priorities yield satisfying fruit.

Please allow me to stretch my metaphor a little more for the sake of application.

Only God is great enough to stand behind His promises.

Malcolm Muggeridge writes of education's failure to deliver the goods. "Education — the great mumbo jumbo and fraud of the ages — purports to equip us to live and is prescribed as a universal remedy for everything from juvenile delinquency to premature senility.

"For the most part it serves to enlarge stupidity, inflate conceit, enhance credulity, and put those subjected to it at the mercy of brainwashers with printing presses, radio, and television at their disposal."

My bulging book shelves affirm my commitment to learning. Yet knowledge alone will not usher in the millenium.

It should also be obvious to our upwardly mobile society that being one of life's beautiful people doesn't produce the desired fruit either.

Toys...work...sex...politics... benevolent acts... Nice try, but no! They just don't deliver the promised rewards. The stories of their failures fill volumes.

Ezra points us away from the gods of our world to the God who has established a reputation for reliability since creation. His dependability over the long haul takes the risk out of faith.

Good soil needed

A second observation worth noting: *An abundant harvest needs carefully prepared soil.*

Ezra had a passion...he set his sights on being nothing less than a man who knew and lived the revealed Word of God. His priorities grew out of the time he invested in study. His plan of action

dictated by what he learned there. His life a mirror of God's law.

No amount of grand ideas and promises will ever bear fruit if we fail to prepare the soil adequately. Dreams of a fairy tale marriage remain dreams if we neglect the disciplines of communication and shared time.

Our walk with God will shrivel on the vine if we fail to drink often of the Living Water offered to us. Our relationships with fellow believers certain to deteriorate if we choose to live independently of them.

Like the children of the exile, our money will find its way into wallets with holes, our stomachs growling inspite of gorging ourselves at banquet tables, and our harvest sparse in spite of the finest of seeds if we fail to prepare our lives according to the Scriptures.

Gordon MacDonald is right! He writes in *Ordering, Our Private World:*

"Our public worlds are filled with a seeming infinity of demands upon our time, our loyalties, our money, and our energies. And because these public worlds of ours are so visible, so real, we have to struggle to ignore all their seduction and demands. They scream for our attention.

"The result is that our private world is often cheated, neglected because it does not shout so loudly. It can be effectively ignored for long periods of time before it gives way to a sink-hole like cave-in."

Perhaps it is time for us to "waste" some time beside the canal in order to prepare for the journey ahead.

A final observation I'd like you to chew on goes like this: *Don't be afraid to share what works for you with others.*

William James, the philosopher, once suggested that "the greatest use of time is to spend it for something that will out last it."

Only God's kingdom lasts forever. Inflation eats away at the value of the dollar. Toys only hold our interest for a brief time, giving way sooner or later to something bigger and better.

The pleasures that titillate our senses today become old hat tomorrow. The latest educational theories are soon tomorrow's out-of-date textbook.

No one can quarantee a disease free, trouble free pilgrimage on Planet Earth. Allowing God's word to guide us does not insure...the satisfaction of all our whims. But make no mistake...right priorities yield satisfying fruit.

Eternity is the only investment without risk. More than one of our friends could use some counsel from a spiritual E.F. Hutton.

Several years ago, our family vacationed on South Pond in Maine. During our stay, Hazel and the children were making their way down to water's edge when Elliot fell into the water. Since Hazel stood several yards away and up an embankment from the scene, she yelled for Cameo to help him stand. As a two-year old, his coordination lacked what it took to get his legs underneath him.

Cameo struggled with one hand to right him, clutching her doll tightly in the other. Sensing a degree of panic by now, Hazel yelled, "Cameo, let go of your doll and help your brother!"

"But mommie, my dollie can't swim!" came the innocent reply.

Like four year olds, we cling to the less important while the things that deserve priority struggle for survival. Which brings us back to the point of this discourse: we harvest only what we sow. That being the case, I suggest that it is time to

Rise up, O men of God!
Have done with lesser things;
Give heart and soul and mind and strength
To serve the King of kings.

Rise up, O men of God!
The church for you doth wait;
Her strength unequal to the task
Rise up and make her great!

—Wm. P. Merrill

□

Clayton Blackstone pastors the Advent Christian Church of New Hope in Lewiston, Idaho.

God's Servant in the Philippines

Advent Christians have been ministering in the Philippines for over thirty years. Over the last eighteen months the Philippines have seen many changes. The *Advent Christian Witness* asked Philippines missionary Margaret Helms about the political climate in the Philippines and the progress of Advent Christian missions in that land. Margaret's insights are based on her 27 years of service in the Philippines as an Advent Christian missionary.

Margaret, what motivated you to consider a career in missions?

Three stages were significant in my decision to go into missions. The first stage was in my childhood when I was in Sunday school. We sang the song, "Rescue the Perishing." That touched my heart. My mother had a great influence because of her interest in missions. Interestingly enough when I was in high school, my sister and I both were in WHFMS and went with my mother to all the meetings. When I went to youth camp, the only time I was a camper, when I was 16, it was at that time that I was challenged to give my life to full-time service.

So in my early years I sensed a need for being a missionary or reaching people. When I was in second grade, our teacher asked what I wanted to be when I grew up, and I said I wanted to be a missionary. I didn't really know what that meant, but those seeds were already there. So at 16 when the call was given to us if we wanted to serve Christ full time, I made my commitment. It was after that that I sought the place where I trained and made the decision to go to New England School of Theology (now Berkshire Christian College).

During my first year we had a missions conference. At that time a challenge was given and I responded, but in talking with one of the faculty members he challenged me not to respond emotionally, but to question whether that was what God really wanted. For four years I prayed for God to show me what He wanted me to do.

His answer was something that I did not recognize at the time, because God led me to be involved in junior church, Sunday school teaching, and Vacation Bible School. Those kind of things showed me God's leading step by step to the final point in my senior year. I felt that He wanted me to offer my life in full-time service as a missionary. So it was a process which I didn't recognize until later.

Could you tell us something about the ministries of the Philippine Conference?

One of the major emphases in the conference is church planting. We also want to train Filipinos for ministry. Oro Bible College is, of course, a major project of the conference although many of our nationals do not perceive it as being a conference project but rather they perceive it as a project of the mission.

So we have been trying to reinforce in their thinking the fact that the college is really their project and we are assisting them. Because of the emphasis on reaching all of the Philippines by the year 2000, our conference has become concerned with church planting and evangelism. This has also helped not only in our church planting process, but it has also caused more of our young people to feel a commitment to serve.

Margaret, what do your responsibilities as a missionary in the Philippines entail?

I have had all kinds of responsibilities in my 27 years of service. This past term my first assignment was working with our Operation 15/85 program as a trainer. We held seminars in churches. At all of our churches we had 9-day seminars. I worked with a team of two Filipinos in those training seminars.

I was also Field Superintendent during this term and in the last two years I have been in a church planting situation in Cebu City. Cebu has a population of about one million. There have been others who have worked with me, and in my responsibilities as Youth Superintendent I have had other tasks.

I have been a member of the Board of Directors at Oro Bible College. I have been involved in planning for the Conference and worked on several boards, so I've been involved with a lot of administrative work as well.

When you first sensed a call to the mission field, are your current responsibilities what you perceived initially that you would be doing? Did you perceive having to do so much administrative work in your function as a missionary?

I don't think I ever thought of myself as doing administrative work. Even now I don't feel that administration is my strong point, but I perceive of it as a job that needs to be done. At the present time, with the present staff, administration is my responsibility. I think I'm able to work with other people and help them plan. My spiritual gifts are mainly teaching; and, of course, my new responsibility when I return in July will be in the training program. We are hoping to start extension training from the college to Cebu to start training the new believers that we have.

Tell me about the Philippine Advent Christian Mission. Who serves with you in the mission and what are you attempting to accomplish in the long term?

We have five missionaries who are actively serving in the Philippines. I am currently the Field Superintendent. Alice Brown is presently the next person with seniority, and she is in her second term. She is the Director of Oro Bible College and part-time faculty member. She is also serving as Field Superintendent while I am home. She serves on many boards and planning committees. She is also presently working on her master's degree in ministry from the Asian Theological Seminary in Manila. So she has been very active, also at the college, because they have students in the church planting situation. She has been very involved in working with the team in church planting. She will be due for furlough this year.

Frank and Judy Jewett have been in the Philippines in Mindowi City, a neighboring city to Cebu. They first had language study and also during the time they were in language study, Bible study began in their village. They have now started worship services, and they are working with a group of people who are middle-to-upper class.

David Vignali, who is our newest missionary, came in August also lives in Cebu City. He has already assumed the responsibilities of Field Treasurer. He is in language study and he is also working with Teen Missions.

The mission has determined that the most important things for us to be doing are church planting and training. We feel that any missionary, regardless of their responsibilities or their assignment, ought in some way be involved in church planting. It doesn't work that they have to do the planting, they have to be involved in some way.

Could you share one or two ways you have seen God working in people's lives through the ministry of the mission?

In our Cebu ministry we had a young girl maybe seven years old, who was in our Sunday school. Her younger brothers and sisters also came to Sunday school, and through that the mother and related family members became a part of a home Bible study. One day this girl was badly burned and the mother asked me to help. I went with them to the hospital. She was concerned that her husband, who was in Manila at the time, would feel that she neglected her responsibilities as a wife and

would physically abuse her for that. She was so upset, that was more her concern than the child who was severely burned.

So we prayed with her that God would calm her husband and help him not to do that and also prayed for the child. Her first letter from her husband confirmed her feelings that he would be mad at her and want to beat her up. But in a later letter he began to think that maybe she hadn't neglected her duty as a mother. As his thinking changed she came immediately and shared the letter with me and said, "God has answered our prayer."

This husband, when he returned from Manila, started attending Bible study. For over a year he had consistently refused being a part of the Bible study feeling that there was nothing for him. But because of how he saw God answer prayer, he became interested in studying the Bible. He would come and ask questions, he borrowed our Bible one time.

He came to the retreat that we had for young people. It was during that retreat that we shared with him how to share the gospel, sharing or telling other people how to reach their neighbors with the gospel. We first deal with them to make sure they have also made a decision for Christ. I am not sure at exactly what point this man made his decision, but he was like a sponge that was soaking everything up. You cold see an obvious change in his life.

I shared with him how to read the Bible and have personal devotions. He said, "Every time I read this it speaks to me." That was in March. When I saw him again in April and took him his New Testament that he had gotten through our Bible study course, he would say, "I am praying for my family and my wife's family that they will be saved." His concern for prayer and also his interest in talking to people about the Lord amazed me. He came back to Cebu at the end of May and asked me to have a Bible study with his aunt and his sister. We started the first of June. The sister said to me that first Sunday when we were there, "My brother told me that he was changed, but I didn't believe him."

Every week it was so thrilling to go to that Bible study, and share what the people were so hungry to hear. During one of those Bible studies one man told me that he felt that he wanted to be a pastor, "I want my wife's family and my family to come to know the Lord, so I want to be a pastor." The end result of this is that he started at Oro Bible College, to prepare for the ministry. The San Vincente Bible Study Fellowship that Frank was leading is happy to support him, his wife and five children so that he could study for the ministry. This whole story is one of the most dramatic things that has happened in Cebu.

Margaret Helms explaining church growth strategies.

Most of us have read about the events in the Philippines last year. In your opinion what impact has the change in government had in that country?

The change brought hope to the people. A sense of pride was restored. As for the relationship of the church to the government — let me say that many people thought that those who did not have jobs would have jobs, and those who did not have enough food, would have enough food and that things

would automatically be turned around. That, of course, has not been true. It takes a long time to restore what has been broken down, so some of the people have been disappointed. The question of Communism, of course, is the big issue in the minds of many people.

There has been some concern in evangelical churches about whether the involvement of the Roman Catholic Church in the election and the inauguration of President Aquino might give them an opportunity to have a dominant influence in her government and cause a curtailment of the Christian sharing of the gospel. I don't believe there is any evidence of that.

The greatest threat I think is Communism. Of course, the Moslem uprising in the South is still a big question mark. They would like complete autonomy. There are so many question marks that even business people have been a bit hesitant to give it everything they have got to restore the economy.

A clarification for our readers: The New People's Army, which are the Communist guerillas, and the Moslem Separatist's guerillas are two separate organizations. Is that correct?

I believe it is but I am not 100% sure. That is my understanding.

Your assessment of Corazon Aquino.

I think she is very sincere. She's a lot more capable than many people were afraid she might be. The *Time* magazine article in the January 5th issue gives a clear picture of her training and her involvement with her husband especially during the time he was in prison. She comes from a family of politicians although she herself had never been involved in politics, partly because of her personality. She evidences a strong dependence upon God and a desire to do what he wants her to do. I think she has a lot more toughness than people thought she had.

Margaret Helms with the Cebu Advent Christian Fellowship.

Let me ask you two more questions in closing. First of all, in what ways can Advent Christians in Canada and in the United States serve with Advent Christian missions?

We especially feel the pinch of lack of missionaries at a time when the Philippine church is the third fastest growing church in the world. Bible studies are being opened in government offices, places of business, hotels, restaurants, and in places where you wouldn't expect. Especially with the political uncertainty it's necessary that we do everything we can while the opportunity is there.

I feel hampered by the fact that we have so few people to do the job. We would even welcome people who don't have formal Bible college training if they are able to lead an evangelistic Bible study or capable of training people. There are a lot of things people could do. I personally want to see sometime in the future a church builders group, maybe a group of men who would come over, give their vacation time, bring some money to help buy materials, and help build a church.

So there's opportunity for short-term projects that people could involve themselves in as well as career service.

Continued on page 21

Difficult

News

Mark Collins

The news came as quite a shock. None the less, it was the truth. Some friends of ours, married just a little longer than us, were getting a divorce.

There were circumstances that made this news especially difficult. He had just been ordained a minister of the Gospel exactly one year ago. We had seen them just before that, and they seemed to be so much in love. What had happened between then and now that could cause two committed people to abandon their marriage?

We still don't know much about the situation. We do know that there had been the loss of a job, and I imagine this caused a strain. Yet there was certainly more than unemployment behind their marriage's death. How had the Destroyer come? I wondered.

An unpleasant truth

Yet beyond the grief of these friends, as intense as it must certainly be, there is still more pain. It is a pain that pierces my heart when I think of them. It is a pain that shakes me to my core as it tells me something ugly, very unpleasant about myself. You see, it was not so very long ago that I had been jealous of them.

He was, you understand, already ordained, and my own ordination was (and still is) years away. Too, they were so wise about saving money, something that I've always had difficulty doing. They seemed so 'together,' so well-adjusted. Things were going so well for them compared to what Roberta and I had experienced. It didn't seem right, and I resented them for their good fortune.

Then there was the fact that I hadn't taken too much time to share with these people, perhaps neglecting them. Of course, this wasn't all my own doing. The miles between us made it difficult, and the fact of the matter is that they were acquainted with me only because they were friends with my wife before we married.

Still, I didn't take the time to find out how things really were going for them because their relationship looked so 'perfect' from the outside. No one in such an ideal situation could use the ear that I could offer, I thought. I was sure that if I ever talked with him I would end up as the one being counseled. My marriage has been very good, but not without its struggles. They didn't appear to struggle. They seemed perfect. Too perfect. What could I have to say to them? Yet beneath the facade of happy smiles things had gone awry.

An important lesson

Now I look back and feel ashamed. I feel my Master's eyes upon me. The lesson He teaches me is hard, but this time I decide to listen. How much I want to change the way things have been! But what would I have said? What could I have done? I will never know. Never did I offer these people a friend's mercy, and I often doubted my Lord's goodness to me.

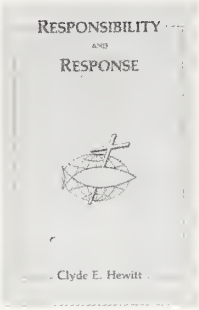
I have now written this man, as he sits alone with his pain. The words I wrote did not come to admonish or gloat, but just to let him know we care, the way I really did care all along.I wish I had let that caring show itself earlier. I wish I could send more than words. I wish I had done something sooner. I wish...But my Master tells me that yesterday has passed, and that its records are written. Yet, today yet lives. "Write," He says, "and trust me to heal..."

I look at the wife that I love, and she looks at me. We hold each other, suddenly afraid that this could happen to us. We promise to work hard so that it never shall. We are silent. All that I have seems like so much now. Now I can see so clearly see how we have been provided for, despite our troubles. How carefully He has guided us and protected us. How gently He has held us. How rich He has made us. I thank the Lord for His mercy, and ask for His forgiveness. And I know that it is done.

I drop the letter to our suffering friend in the mail, sending with it my prayers and hopes. And I resolve never to be so worried about myself again. □

Mark Collins is active at First Advent Christian Church in Tustin, California. He works full time in public relations with the Orange County Transit District and is pursuing studies at Fuller Theological Seminary.

Charting Advent Christian History



"For many years after its formation in 1860 the Advent Christian denomination played second fiddle to its publications ministry!" With these words Clyde E. Hewitt establishes a major theme of his second volume of Advent Christian history, *Responsibility and Response* (Charlotte, NC: Venture Books, 1986, $9.95). Dr. Hewitt, Professor Emeritus of History at Aurora University, lifelong Advent Christian and son of a former denominational chief executive, has effectively combined his professional skills and Christian commitment to produce this new volume which continues the story began so ably in *Midnight and Morning*.

On the surface it chronicles 125 years of Advent Christian publications, but it is more than that. The picture it draws is of a denomination whose existence found its center in and took its identities from its major regional periodicals. "They, more than anything else, shaped the denomination and often seemed to be the denomination," writes Hewitt.

Early Adventists were divided over the wisdom of establishing a separate denomination. It was a question of means rather than ends for most, however, as Adventists were united in their sense of responsibility to the world. How best to meet that responsibility? Would a separate denominational existence restrict the field of labor? Would the vision of world evangelism be narrowed to serving those of "like precious faith"? Without denominational unity, on the other hand, would the movement become so fragmented, even anarchic, as to forestall an effective ministry of any sort? Our forebears responded by establishing the Advent Christian Association in 1860, in large part to provide a body which would be legally responsible for the *World's Crisis*.

Exploring our heritage

In what is arguably the most important chapter in the book, Hewitt explores the heritage which Advent Christians brought into their new denomination and the ways in which this heritage was to prove both strength and weakness. Emphasis on the nearness of the second advent, including occasional date setting, won converts but had unfortunate long-term results for growth, as it meant that little thought was given to nurture, long-term planning and organization, or physical facilities. Most clergy were evangelists rather than pastors who, after garnering converts, "acted like they didn't know what to do with them," and moved on to new fields of evangelization. Some were excellent debaters, displaying extensive biblical knowledge, but were often so tenacious and dogmatic that "they rendered themselves obnoxious" to the very people they were trying to reach.

Among the early leaders of the Advent Christian denomination were persons of larger and those of smaller vision. Many possessed strong personalities and sometimes differences evolved into personality conflicts and struggles for position with, all too often, Miles Grant at the center. Grant became the dominant personality among Advent Christians in the latter 19th century with some positive but more frequently negative results. These conflicts led to the loss of many talented persons who had the larger vision necessary for the future growth of the denomination. The loss of so many actual and potential leaders was a blow from which the church never fully recovered.

From early in their existence Adventists displayed an exclusiveness arising in part out of the persecutions which they faced. Their beliefs set them outside the mainstream of American Protestant Christianity and they were often rejected by it. As a result Advent Christians began to see themselves as "a chosen and somehow 'different' people," which over time led them to defensiveness and an unwelcoming attitude toward outsiders. These and other aspects of Advent Christian heritage are discussed most perceptively by Hewitt, who thereby greatly assists us in understanding ourselves.

Survey of publications

Other chapters chronicle the stories of the major regional periodicals. The names *World's Crisis, Messiah's Advocate, Our Hope, Present Truth Messenger* and *Appalachian Advent Christian*, among others, will bring nostalgic memories to many. With each publication were associated many men and women, some quite colorful, who contributed to their successes and, yes, to their eccentricities and failures. There are stories here that will not only instruct, but also

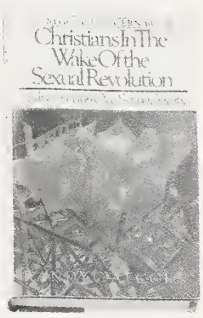
delight and entertain.

Advent Christians today, writes Hewitt, "think and act in ways often determined by the ways Advent Christians of the first generation thought and acted, but he also notes that heritage does not completely shape the future. Inheritance is modified as it is reflected upon and as new challenges arise. This book is a major contribution to our understanding of the Advent Christian Church today. It should provide an important beginning point for deliberations on the future of the denomination.

—*David T. Arthur*

Dr. David Arthur is Professor of History and Curator of the Jenks Memorial Collection of Adventual Materials at Aurora University in Aurora, Illinois.

Coping Biblically with the Sexual Revolution



Christians in the Wake of the Sexual Revolution: Recovering Our Sexual Sanity by Randy C. Alcorn, Multnomah Press.

In the first chapter author Randy Alcorn sketches for us the moral situation of America: Pornographic magazines at the neighborhood convenience store, live sex shows, x-rated movies on cable television and on our VCRs, and the rarity of chastity:

Were a future civilization to one day unearth the tell-tale ruins of present day America, it would undoubtedly conclude we spent a third of our time having sex, another third planning it, and the other third talking about it (p. 19). Nothing surprising here.

Then twenty-three pages into the book, he slaps us across the face several times. "How different is the church?" *Not very.* In a few pages he sketches forty instances of sexual immorality by evangelical Christians. He knows. He counseled most of them. And he ministers in a small town in Oregon!

In Alcorn's words the book is not "a practical 'how to' guide for resisting sexual temptation" but "a proper foundation of right thinking about sex" (p. 9). He traces "the Whos, Hows, and Whys of the Sexual Revolution" and the "contributions" of liberal Protestant scholars to it. In "Part 2—Life in a Technological Corinth" he examines the relationship of sex to the media, children, pornography, homosexuality, and the current "Backlash to the Great Sex Swindle."

Alcorn maintains that "God Has Something to Say" about sex: Positively, negatively, the consequences of, and recovery from. He's quite conservative on "Premarital Intimacy," more so than such well known evangelicals as Lewis Smedes and Steve Clapp. He makes an excellent case for his position. "My counseling experience indicates that the Christian community is full of unintentional adulteries, unplanned fornications, and unpremeditated sins of every variety" (p. 224).

The author finishes with practical advice about what we can do in family, church, and world "to promote sexual purity."

Sexual education begins at birth...Every child receives a sex education. The only questions are: From whom? When? Where?...The most fundamental aspect of sex education is modeling and teaching proper sexual identity—helping boys learn to be boys and girls to be girls, and like it that way" (p. 257).

He might have added that boys should learn to be gentle and to consider their sisters as equals.

Alcorn does want believers to be active in opposing pornography and abortion—and in providing services such as Crisis Pregnancy Centers. We should promote tougher legislation and rigorous enforcement. Push television producers. The Christian *community* should get involved; individual action does not carry sufficient weight. Alcorn gives examples of effective measures.

Although one might quibble with minor points, this book is a careful, interesting, helpful work by somebody who knows exactly what he is talking about. It contains a useful annotated bibliography of 27 items. I look forward to other Critical Concern Books from Multnomah Press. (For a review of its *Beyond Hunger: A Biblical Mandate for Social Responsibility* and its *The Controversy: Roots of the Creation Evolution Conflict*, see the *Witness*, October 1985, pp. 18-19.)

—*Freeman Barton*

Dr. Freeman Barton currently serves at the Learning Resources Center at Warner Southern College in Lake Wales, Florida.

A New Frontier for Missions

It's a rare and special pleasure to find a book that breaks new ground in any field, especially in missions. This book is one! The author, a Japanese product of cross cultural and missionary

outreach in Japan, is now an evangelical leader and scholar. *God's New Envoys* (Multnomah Press), Dr. Tetsuano Yamamori calls our attention to a new challenge to the Great Commission and that is sharing the gospel in "closed countries."

In a convincing and disturbing presentation, the author informs us that by the year 2000, eighty four percent of the world's non-christians will live in countries that are closed to traditional missionary outreach. Dr. Yamamori not only presents the challenge, but addresses it with a bold and distinctive strategy for reaching these countries. The strategy involves around "tent making." While "tent making" has been around since New Testament times, it is presented here not as a means to support one's self while the gospel is presented, but to serve as a "passbook vocation" to allow these new missionaries entrance into traditionally "closed countries."

The book presents a challenge on what these new missionaries should be, how they should be recruited, how they should be trained to minister cross culturally, and how to work through the means of a secular vocation. These new "envoys of the gospel" will face hostility and great danger to their lives in this ministry.

The strategy is presented not only clearly, but Biblically as a way to reach souls for Christ. The author challenges us to think, and to continue thinking about his ideas, for each chapter closes with questions for "thought and review." This book might be used as a mission study. Dr. Yamamori has made an important contribution to future missionary strategy for the closing days of time.

—*Harold Patterson*

Harold Patterson is Director of World Missions for the Advent Christian General Conference.

Disaster or Renewal?

Is the Church on the brink of disaster, or on the threshhold of renewal and revival? James and Elizabeth Newby have collected interviews with fifteen notable Christians concerning the state of the Church. The result is **Between Peril & Promise,** (Thomas Nelson Publishing) a fascinating cross-section of Christian thinking on the past, present, and future of Christianity. Catholic mystics, Anglican charismatics, evangelicals, Eastern Orthodox, Baptist fundamentalists, and mainline Methodists are represented side-by-side, and the results are a delight, both for the commonalities and for the differences which are expressed.

Surprisingly, some of the greatest variety of opinion emerged from the evangelical quarter. When asked what developments in Christianity cause him the greatest concern, Elton Trueblood decried the rise of ritual in worship. Two younger evangelicals, Robert Webber, of Wheaton College, and Jack Sparks, chancellor at St. Athanasius Seminary, welcomed the trend toward ritual as a healthy identification of evangelicals with their historical roots.

Between Peril & Promise reveals great diversity, yet unity is also apparent among the various traditions represented. A new ecumenical spirit is shown, which focuses not on mergers and political restructuring, but on the Lordship of Christ, and our common life in Him. It is a unity which recognizes the diversity of traditions, creeds, and styles with an attitude of grace.

Contributors were optimistic about the future of the Church. When asked if its survival was a live question, Carl Henry answered simply and eloquently: "Destruction of the true church is excluded by Jesus Christ's resurrection, ascension, priestly ministry, and final return. He is the Head of the body—the supernatural source of the church's distinctive life." This theme was echoed from every theological corner.

Optimism about the Church gave way to pessimism about the future of old structures which embody local churches and denominations. The stale, threadbare, and stuffy ways of doing business as a church are destined to fall, a reality which several contributors applauded. If the institutions have failed their mission of nurturing a passionate and vigorous faith in people's lives, then good riddance; new styles and forms will arise.

Between Peril & Promise is loaded with meat on which Advent Christians need to chew. We are not known for engaging the larger Christian world in dialogue. Insulated in our smaller communities, we may miss opportunities to share our distinctives with the larger Church, as well as failing to learn lessons which others have already learned the hard way. Lay people and pastors will find *Between Peril and Promise* good reading and a challenge to parochial thinking. ☐

—*Rick Reynolds*

Rick Reynolds is Associate Pastor of the Seattle Advent Christian Church.

Ten Ways Cont. from pg. 7

explain to them that that's what their spirit looks like inside when they are feeling dark and angry. Have them ask Jesus to empty the bad feelings from their hearts while they pour the water in their container down the drain. When their hearts, and the continer are 'empty', have them ask Jesus to fill them with His love as they refill the container with clear water to which they have added a drop or two of food coloring. We use a vinegar cruet with a glass stopper so the result can be kept as a reminder for a few days. Now my children often ask to make their 'happy water'; they are learning to deal with their emotions in a positive way by recognizing that they have negative feelings and that they can control these with help from their Savior. □

Suzanne Campbell is a freelance writer living in New Hope, Minnesota.

God's Servant From page 15

Right! People who would be even evangelists or people who could be able to teach on certain specialized subjects. Even at the college we could still use some people. We desperately need someone with musical abilities to teach music at the college. Also specialized theology and pastoral training; right now we will have a real need for that.

What are some ways our readers can pray about regarding your work as a missionary and also the work of the mission in the Philippines?

I challenge people to pray for the political situation in the Philippines, because I believe God answered prayer last February when President Marcos left and President Aquino was inaugurated. I believe that was a direct result of prayer and because of the uncertainty of Communism and the Moslems, it's important to continue to pray for political stability.

Secondly, for us as missionaries, the major thing we are involved in are church planting and training. In Cebu where the Jewetts are and Frank and David are living, we hope to plant five different churches and so that is a real challenge. That is our goal: Planting five churches in greater Cebu. When I get back I'll be helping teach those who are new Christians to be actively involved in that same ministry.

For Oro Bible College, the Capital Funds Drive for this year is important. We desperately need dormitory space for male students, for married students, and for faculty. We need a director's home and expansion of our kitchen facilities. Our classrooms need to be reevaluated because of our increasing enrollment.

The need for more missionaries is acute. Also pray for the national church. Because of all of the turmoil many people have had to leave their homes. Financially the conference, at a time it would like to expand, is not able to because of finances. Pray that God would provide financially and also spiritually for our workers, and that He would raise up more Filipinos to serve.

Pray that there would be a real challenge in the national church to reach out to their own people. Interestingly enough we have a few of our people who are beginning to have a vision for ministry outside of the Philippines. One girl has had a burden for quite some time to go to Burma, and there seems to be a real possibility that God will honor that burden. □

How to Find a Job with Purpose and Meaning

Over 35,000 current job openings in Christian organizations are waiting to be filled! Let Intercristo's Christian Placement Network match your skills, education and experience with a job that offers deeper personal satisfaction. Call or write today!

TOLL FREE
1-800-426-1342
AK, HI, WA, and Canada call (206) 546-7330

Intercristo
The Career and Human Resource Specialists
19303 Fremont Avenue North
Seattle, Washington 98133

Name _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Publication _____ a division of CRISTA

Caroline Michael
Director

God Can Use My Life

Carol Chadwick

As a new Christian, I sat on the floor at a youth group meeting listening to the enthusiastic young man who had led me to the Lord just a few weeks before. He spoke of his own experience with Christ when he was in college. "I did everything," he admitted. "In fact, I was so bad, the head of the Christian fellowship on campus stated publicly that I would never become a Christian."

His expression softened as he looked at each of us. "But, I'll tell you," he nearly whispered, "that kind of life is empty and Christ is the only way to start over." My spirit rejoiced within me, delighting in having made this start. I realized that many other young people would come to Christ because of the man's story.

My joy dimmed as I felt a twinge. *Will people ever come to Christ after hearing my testimony?* I wondered.

A year later, I gathered with other members of my church to hear the heart-warming and inspirational testimonies of several young men, now living at an outreach center, who had been snatched from the brink of destruction through drug and alcohol abuse. One young man, dressed in clothes twice his size, glowed as he stated, "I don't need drugs anymore. Jesus has given me everything I need." As tears filled his eyes, I experienced that twinge again. My mind sludged into low gear in introspection. *Did I show that same joy when I shared how God had changed my life?*

Can God use me?

Since accepting Christ and learning what a testimony was, I felt that mine was powerless. Unlike more dramatic testimonies, I didn't believe it would draw people to Christ and thus was afraid to share it. I knew God had life-transforming power. I had seen him use a changed life to change others, but could he use my life? My mind slid back recalling the good, the happy life I had led.

Over the tops of the pews, I could barely see the procession of red and gold, ending starkly with the tall, deep-voiced minister in his black robe. He appeared as God to my child-eyed perception and I watched him in awe. My skin tingled as triumphant processional strains filled the holy place and he passed by me.

I trembled as we left the church service and he took my tiny hand in his. "Good morning," he said, smiling. He straightened his immense frame extending his hand to my father while I shyly slipped past.

Another Sunday, my Sunday school class was presented with Bibles. Trying to sit still as our teacher had instructed, we all perched in a row, legs swinging because they couldn't touch the floor. My heart raced as I anticipated hearing "God" call my name. He fingered the smooth leather of the first Bible as he called, "Carl Henderson." No one moved. I turned to see if someone's parents stood up. None did. We sat looking at each other as he tentatively called the name again.

The teacher touched me gently on the arm, "He's calling you dear. He means Carol Anderson." Scurrying forward to receive the book, I thought, "Doesn't this man know my name? Doesn't he know I'm a girl?" I knew then that if he couldn't even say my name correctly, he wasn't God! So where was God?

Continued search

My questions continued through my childhood and into my teen years when peer pressure began to hinder the search. The time came for confirmation class and I wanted it to be special. I anticipated it being a solemn holy event that would mark a turning point in my life. Most of all, I hoped to find answers. This minister was an older man with a British accent. He questioned us about our commitments. "How many of you pray at least once a day?" he asked expectantly.

My hand would have shot up, almost of its own accord, had I not caught myself and glanced around the room. I prayed everyday, trying to get God to answer my questions, but it was clear as I looked from one blank face to the next that none of my friends did. One almost chuckled, his sideways grin saying, "You can't be serious." Others simply stared sullenly at the minister saying nothing.

I looked back at him, disappoint-

ment evident on his face. He seemed almost ready to cry. I was too. I longed to tell him, to ask him, but what would my friends think? I kept my hands in my lap and looked down at them, then the floor, then to my friends — anything but his face. We sat quietly and listened until it was time to leave.

As we left the church, my friends discussed the class. "Oh yes, I pray every day," mocked one of them in an English accent. Everyone laughed and we walked along, some lighting cigarettes as we left the church yard. I laughed with the rest but inside I was confused and sad.

New life

As time went on, my feelings about God came under scrutiny. I had searched but couldn't find God. I no longer trusted implicitly and believed all I had heard in Sunday school. I questioned. God seemed so distant. I even wondered whether he really existed.

Then a new youth program began at our church. My mother insisted that I try it despite my doubts and it was here that I finally saw the needs of my life met.

It began with finding Christ, the new foundation for my life. He came into my life and filled me completely, cleansing me of my sins. He added a purpose to the law I had followed since childhood.

Because of this new life, I found new meaning in the Bible. I couldn't wait to get home from school so I could read more of the Word — it came alive. I devoured the New Testament in a matter of days.

Next, for that difficult time, God provided a new set of close friends. That youth group grew and developed over the two years before I went to college. We became close, supporting one another and filling the need for true friends.

I realize that my feelings of inadequacy and powerlessness had been a problem since first becoming a Christian, sometimes fading away, other times arising again, but often keeping me from sharing. I knew that I had to deal with this now and move on in Christ.

A week later at a Bible study, a woman whose background I knew to be similar to mine, stated emphathetically that although she had been a Christian much of her life and had been raised in a Christian home, she had seen God use her special testimony to lead others to the Lord. Her conviction and joy gave me the encouragement that I needed to overcome my own feelings of inadequacy and begin sharing with joy and confidence.

God can use our testimonies

Since then, God has shown me some special things about my testimony. First, it is personal. It is my testimony and I am accountable before God to share it. Jesus did not say, "Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations if you have a dramatic testimony." He said, "Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit," (Matthew 28:19). God will use everything I am and have if I will let him. My testimony is exactly what someone needs to hear and I need only to be ready and willing to share it. God will do the rest.

When I share, my testimony is powerful. A "powerful" testimony need not tell how Jesus saved a murderer or drug-addict. Jesus saved me, I needed saving. Any sin, no matter how severe or subtle would have been enough to separate me from God eternally if I lacked a payment. The act of grace God extended to me is powerful because I did not deserve it.

Additionally, I need only reflect briefly to detect God's powerful hand moving in events around me. It is powerful to see that God placed me in the family he did, that he planted in me a deep desire to know him, and that a youth group arose at the time of my most serious questioning before the desire was quenched.

Too, my testimony shows protection. After talking with people, I realized that although someone's story may be more starkly dramatic than mine, there is often great pain associated with their lives before Christ, though now fully forgiven. I'm grateful that God didn't require me to go through that. He spared me and spoke to me through the quiet but intense questioning of a teenager.

Recently, I was sharing with someone about Christ and she said, "I feel I'm saved because I've always tried to do what's right and I've lived a good life." I felt another twinge which I've come to identify as the prompting of God's Holy Spirit. This time as I shared my testimony of needing God's grace, there was no twinge of inadequacy — only joy, knowing that indeed, God could use my life. □

Carol is a graduate of Gordon College in Wenham, Massachusetts with a degree in English. She is currently living in Wolfeboro, New Hampshire where her husband is the pastor of the Evangelical Bible Church (Advent Christian).

Piedmont WHFMS Conference

"What will be 'herstory' in the year 2000 in the Advent Christian Church?" is a question Director of Christian Education Millie Griswold posed to the women gathered at Long's Grove, Monroe, NC for the annual meeting of the Piedmont WHFMS. Millie reviewed highlights of women's contributions to denominational life and mentioned women in leadership today. She stimulated the women to brainstorm in small groups the following two challenges: 1. How will you make evangelism a priority and reverse the greying of the church? 2. What changes need to be made in women's ministries in your church to increase its vitality and appeal?

Pastor Michael Lupo of First Church, Charlotte and the Gastonia Mission invited the women to recognize the ministry potential they have and to go in obedience and share their testimony.

Agnes Bost of Dulin's Grove, Charlotte, NC shared devotional thoughts, three of the Helms sisters of the Shiloh Church, Monroe, NC sang a trio number, and Mary Dodd of Concord, NC conducted a memorial service. President Angela Johnson and Vice-president Randee Davis were appointed as delegates to the National WHFMS Convention at Charleston, WV.

Caroline Michael, Director of Women's Ministries, reported on the progress of our Trained Resource Persons. Through this program possibilities for change and evangelism are brought into focus.

Connecticut and Western Massachusetts WHFMS

At the annual meeting in Plainville, CT, Cheryl Caron challenged the women to use their talents and be faithful stewards. They viewed the exceptional film, "Peace Child," which documents the startling reaction of stone age people in the South Pacific to the message of the Gospel. "Mission day" featured furloughing missionary from India Marion Damon. Marion challenged the women to do as the Indian Christians do...bring their unsaved friends and neighbors to the church services.

A chalk artist and former missionary to Venezuela was the guest speaker at their fall rally in East Norwalk. Their next conference meeting will be at Camp Plainville in August. Conference officers include: President Ann Ball, Vice-president Edith Palmer, Secretary Dorothy Stevens, Treasurer Lucy Greisner, and Auxiliary Superintendent Marion Drake.

Clifton Forge, Virginia

Senior citizens at Lone Star. Mary Deeds is on the left.

The WHFMS circles of Lone Star Advent Christian Church entertained the senior citizens of their community with a Valentine Banquet. Rev. and Mrs. Linwood Rowe and Frank and Mary Deeds were given gifts as the oldest couples present. Youngest seniors were also recognized as Arnold and Mary Morgan and Johnie and Margaret Reynolds. One of Lone Star's goals for this year is to be more caring for the elderly in their community.

National WHFMS Convention

Saturday, June 20, 1987

9 AM Devotions — Margaret Helms
Special music
Reports, Election of officers,
Discussion topics

12:15 PM Salad buffet
Speaker — Barbara Deverick — "Sharing the Vision Where You Are"
Vocalist — Melodie Griswold

The salad buffet is by reservation only. Please use coupon below. If you purchase a General Conference meal ticket, there is an additional charge of $3 for the buffet.

. . . . . .

I wish to make _____ reservation(s) for the salad buffet.

_____ I will have a General Conference meal ticket. I'm enclosing $3 for my buffet ticket.

_____ I (we) will be coming on Saturday only. Enclosed is $7 for each buffet ticket.

Name: _____

Address: _____

_____

Please mail coupon and check to: Judy Tidwell, 1002 Grove Ave., SW, Lenoir, NC 28645 before June 1, 1987.

Junior Action and Youth Fellowship

West Jacksonville, FL Advent Christian Church

Our young people had an exciting year! God poured out His Spirit and many accepted Jesus as their Savior and others rededicated their lives to Him. To bring meaning to our lives as Christians, we've learned to love, appreciate, and believe in each other.

The programs in the Junior Action Leadership packets were superb. We especially appreciated the materials on the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit and even made the plaster of Paris molds to represent the symbols for each part of the Godhead.

Highlights of some of our "fun" activities included: building a human pyramid, feeding each other ice cream sundaes, and drinking whole pitchers of Kool-aid. We sang Christmas carols from house to house in the community near our new church and visited in a home for senior citizens.

"Celebration of Love," a collection of love songs including the parable of the good Samaritan and 1 Corinthians 13, with choreography and costuming depicting early Christians, was presented in both the spring and the fall. It was a blessing to each one participating.

We have grown spiritually as we have listened to our Lord speak to us in His Word and in prayer and by allowing His Spirit to teach, instruct, and correct us. We have also grown numerically. In one year we more than doubled our average attendance.

Special fellowship times during the year included: a pizza party, skating party, summer retreat, bike hike, tubing, Youth Week with Pastor Robin, Bible Character Masquerade party, scavenger hunts, summer retreat, and attending Christian concerts.

Our goals for 1987:

1. Encourage all young people to accept Jesus as Lord and Savior by teaching God's Word so that it becomes a real way of life
2. Encourage each youth to walk daily by His Spirit and to pray and study God's Word
3. Develop outreach ministries in our community through summer day camp, Olympics, and visitation in the neighborhood of our new church
4. Encourage all believers to obey God's call to their tasks within the Church
5. To begin a King's Jewels Group and train leaders for our youth groups

—Darleen Snow
Youth Director

Thank you for that great report, Darleen.

Mission Prayer Partnership

May

18 **Pray** that the Lord would raise up those with a burden for planting new Advent Christian Churches.

19 **Pray** for **Bessie Smith** that the Lord will use her to inspire others to missionary service.

20 **Pray** for **Floyd** and **Musa Powers** as they assist a Japanese pastor in the opening of a new church.

21 **Pray** for our national pastors in the **Philippines** for God's blessing upon their health and ministry for Christ.

22 **Pray** for our national pastors in **Nigeria** and for God's blessing for health and prosperity in their ministry.

23 **Pray** for our national pastors in **Malaysia** that God would bless them with good health and an enlarged ministry.

24 **Pray** for our national pastors in **Japan** that God would bless them with good health and an increase in their congregations.

25 **Pray** for the national pastors in **Japan** for their health and for many decisions for Christ in their ministry.

26 **Pray** for **Lucas** and **Beulah Devasahayam** in their exciting ministry in **Malaysia.**

27 **Pray** for **Marion Damon** that God will give her wisdom as she seeks God's will for expanding our work in India.

28 **Praise** the Lord for **Frank** and **Judy Jewett's** ministry in reaching men in Cebu and for the growth of the San Vicente fellowship.

29 **Pray** for **Francis** and **Lyne Ssebikindu** in their growing and demanding ministry in Memphis.

30 **Pray** for the recent graduates of **Berkshire Christian College** and their future service for Christ.

31 **Pray** for the **Berkshire Christian College Task Force** that God would show them His perfect will for the college's future.

June

1 **Pray** for **E.K. Akpan** and the challenging

ministry he has in directing our **Nigerian** Conference.

2 **Pray** for **Austin** and **Dorothy Warriner** as they spend a few months here in the United States sharing their vision of missions.

3 **Pray** for **Beryl Joy Hollis** in her ministry of encouragement in our **Indian** churches.

4 **Pray** for **Alice Brown** that she might enjoy some rest at home as she begins her furlough.

5 **Pray** for **Thambusamy** and **Victoria Devairakkam** in the growing and varied ministry they have in **Malaysia.**

6 **Praise** the Lord for **Margaret Helms** productive ministry in deputation.

7 **Pray** for **Dave Vignali** as he assists the **Philippine Teen** Mission young people in their ministry for Christ.

8 **Pray** for **Barbara White** that God will continue to grant her victories in Christ.

9 **Pray** for **Steve** and **Ann Lay** as they travel and minister for Christ.

10 **Pray** for **Dr. Roland Griswold** and the important challenges that he gives our denomination as Director of Church Expansion and give him a special blessing on this his birthday.

11 **Pray** for **Howard** and **Anna May Towne** as they minister in Mission Conferences in the USA, especially bless **Anna** on this her birthday.

12 **Pray** that the Lord will prepare the hearts of all the delegates for a successful **General Conference.**

13 **Pray** for our missionaries' children, especially **Danny Jewett** on this his birthday.

14 **Pray** for God's protection and journeying mercies on our delegates as they travel to General Conference.

15 **Pray** for our **Executive Council** in the important decisions they will be making this week.

16 **Pray** for the **EVP, David Northup** and the many responsibilities and duties that fall upon him this week.

17 **Pray** for our **President, Donald Wrigley** as he leads the Executive Council and the General Conference forward in Christ.

18 **Pray** for **Timothy Lay** that he might have a rich blessing on this his birthday.

Mission Directory

INDIA

Barbara White (January 14)
Box 17, Andivilla
Kodaikanal 624101
INDIA

Beryl Joy Hollis (December 16)
American Advent Mission
Velacheri, Madras 600 042
INDIA

JAPAN

Steven Lay (November 28)
Ann Lay (September 13)
Beth Lay (March 26, 1975)
Timothy Lay (June 18, 1977)
3-2-35 Asukano Minami
Ikoma Shi, 630-01
JAPAN

Austin Warriner (January 1)
Dorothy Warriner (January 18)
Japan Advent Christian Mission
3-37 Okayama Higashi 5 Chome
Shijonawate Shi
Osaka Fu 575
JAPAN

Floyd Powers (October 8)
Musa Powers (February 28)
Rebecca Powers (November 11, 1971)
1478 Shironomae
Mikage-Cho
Higashinada-Ku
Kobe 658
JAPAN

MALAYSIA

Thambusamy Devairakkam
Victoria Devairakkam
Advent Christian Church
3A, Jalan Sayang Housing Trust
86000 Kluang, Johor
MALAYSIA

Lucas Devasahayam
Beulah Devasahayam
A.C. Bethel Church
30, Taman Gembira
Post kod-42700
Banting, Selangor
MALAYSIA

PHILIPPINES

Frank Jewett (December 1)
Judy Jewett (January 29)
Danny Jewett (June 13, 1976)
Timmy Jewett (June 26, 1978)
Letitia Jewett (April 13, 1980)
P.O. Box 263
Cebu City 6401
PHILIPPINES

David Vignali (May 10)
P.O. Box 263
Cebu City 6401
PHILIPPINES

Alice Brown (March 24)
Box 223
Cagayan de Oro City 8401
PHILIPPINES

Howard Towne (May 5)
Anna May Towne (June 11)
Dansalan College Foundation
P.O. Box 5430
Iligan City 8801
PHILIPPINES

MEMPHIS MISSION

Francis Ssebikindu (May 13)
Lyne Ssebikindu (May 8)
Faith Nancy (September 28, 1982)
Ashley Grace (January 21, 1985)
2590 Faxon Ave.
Memphis, TN 38112

ON LEAVE

Bessie Smith (March 27)
Box 657, Waukewan Street
Meredith, NH 03253

ON FURLOUGH

Marion Damon (March 27)
c/o Mrs. Elbert Damon
209 Wendell Road
Miller's Falls, MA 01349

Margaret Helms (September 18)
3612 Brief Rd. E
Monroe, NC 28110

*The missionaries' birthdates follow their names.

Can Revival Save America?

"Mr. Colson, what's wrong in our country? Why can't we get a revival going that will save America?"

The questioner—a distinguished looking man, probably in his early sixties, dressed in a three-piece pinstripe suit—fitted comfortably into the opulent surroundings of the downtown city club where I was speaking to twenty-five community leaders. My topic that morning had been the need for a genuine spiritual awakening.

I've been asked this same question hundreds of times. Most often by people like this businessman who fear runaway inflation and the creeping encroachment of big government. To many of them "revival" is a magic word. It means having the sort of close relationship with God which just might offer side benefits as well. With traditional values and authority caving in, they hope God can be cajoled by the "revived" into saving our well-heeled lifestyles, protecting our positions and possessions.

Their anxieties reflected by this question are epidemic in our nation today. A glance at best-seller titles makes that clear: *Looking Out for Number One, Crisis Investing, How to Prosper in the Coming Bad Times,* and on and on. It is understandable—and very human—that amid such uncertain times we want to cling to what we have, yearning nostalgically for the "good old days."

But while millions of Americans myself included, pray fervently for revival, we must ask ourselves whether we are asking God to save our society, ourselves, or our souls. Whether we actually know what God demands of us. Whether we really know what revival is. Far from being linked with prosperity or the righting of precarious economies, the great revivals in the history of the church have begun when people have had to submit totally, in ways that seem antithetical (by human and cultural standards) to everything they should have done to survive.

The key to revival

A prime example is England at the time of the Second Great Wesley Awakening. Parliament's vote to support the crusading Christian Parliamentarian Wilberforce and put a stop to slave trade voted directly against their own economic interests as a nation.

There are recent awakenings in nations such as Romania, Argentina and the Soviet Union that have come about under conditions of great human oppression. They key seems to be that only when individuals, whether by will or by force, subordinate their own interests and desires for self-preservation, God can begin to move in a powerful way.

The message here for American Christians is put most powerfully in Alexander Solzhenitsyn's prophetic words written amid unspeakable human suffering in a Soviet prison: "The meaning of earthly existence is not, as we have grown used to thinking, in prosperity, but in the development of the soul" (*Gulag Archipelego II).*

Normally, I avoid a direct answer to this revival question when I think, like I did on this morning, that the questioner is more concerned about his pocketbook than about genuine spiritual awakening. But on this morning, tired from tours of several prisons and a hard night on a lumpy hotel mattress, I responded forthrightly. "The real trouble is that we Christians are not willing to accept the gospel for what it is," I said. "It doesn't tell us how to save anything but our souls.

"You see," I continued, "it's a two-edged sword. Jesus came not only to comfort the afflicted, but to afflict the comfortable. Any hope for revival must begin with genuine repentance, our willingness to give up what we have, and our desire to change."

As I studied the expressions around the table, I realized that idea of giving up what we have—losing our lives for His sake, as Christ tells His disciples to do—is not any more popular today, in our obsessively materialistic society, than it was to the rich young ruler.

Before any awakening can begin, I am convinced that we Christians must come to terms with some hard spiritual truths, just as Solzhenitsyn did in prison. Instead of "using" the gospel to protect what we have, we need to come before our sovereign Master in repentance and surrender.

Revival is God's work; man cannot engineer it. But if we in good conscience ask our sovereign Creator to favor us with a mighty moving of His Spirit, we must obey His clear commands and never distort His gospel for our own self-seeking purposes.

The gospel is good news. But Jesus never said it was easy news. The central truth about the cross is death before life, repentance before reward. Before His gospel can be the good news of redemption, it must be the bad news of the conviction of sin. □

from Who Speaks for God. *Used by permission.*

AC04349
University of North Carolina
Serials Dept Davis Library
080 A
Chapel Hill, NC 27514

ADVENT CHRISTIAN
GENERAL CONFERENCE

P.O. Box 23152
14601 Albemarle Road
Charlotte, NC 28212

C286.7
A24

Advent Christian WITNESS

June 1987

PRACTICING GOOD STEWARDSHIP

pages four and eight

Member
epa
Evangelical Press Association

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
Robert J. Mayer

MISSIONS
Harold Patterson

WHFMS
Caroline M. Michael

GRAPHIC ARTS
Linda Perault

TYPESETTING
Susan Gettis

EFMA
MEMBER MISSION

EVANGELICAL COUNCIL FOR FINANCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY
ECFA
MEMBER
The symbol of trust

Advent Christian Witness (ISSN 0741-4307) is published monthly except for a combined July-August issue, 11 times a year, by the Advent Christian General Conference of America, 14601 Albemarle Road, P.O. Box 23152, Charlotte, NC 28212. Postmaster: Send address changes to *Advent Christian Witness*, P.O. Box 23152, Charlotte, NC.

Policy: As the official publication of the Advent Christian General Conference of America, the *Advent Christian Witness* publishes the teachings of the Advent Christian Church and promotes the task of evangelism both in North America and throughout the world.

Rates in the U.S. and Canada: one year, $11.00. Single Copy, $1.00. Overseas one year, $14.00.

All articles and materials are copyright ©1987 by the Advent Christian General Conference unless otherwise indicated. Permission to reprint available upon request. The views expressed in this magazine are those of the author and may not necessarily reflect those of the editor or the Advent Christian General Conference.

from the editor

General Conference Time Again

This month, several hundred Advent Christians from across the United States and Canada will come to Charleston, West Virginia to fellowship together, worship Jesus Christ, and assess the ministry of our denomination. General Conference is a time to renew old acquaintances, make new friends, and share together the joys and sorrows of our work for God's Kingdom.

Several important issues always arise at each General Conference meeting but this year at Charleston, one concern will dominate: How will Advent Christians train future pastors, missionaries, administrators, and church planters for service? Without missionaries to open new avenues of world ministry, without pastors to lead our nearly three hundred and fifty existing congregations, without church planters to develop new congregations in American and Canadian metropolitan areas, without administrators to manage regional and national ministries, the Advent Christian Church faces a bleak future.

What can this General Conference do to insure a strong, biblical program for leadership training? First, prayer is vital. We call ourselves Christians. That means we recognize Christ's lordship over all of life. What would happen if we replaced one hour of business with one hour of prayer about this specific issue?

General Conference delegates must insist that whatever program is developed holds as its primary goal the training of Advent Christian pastors, missionaries, church planters, and leaders. The goal is not to train students to be theologians (though theology is important) but give them skills to serve Jesus Christ effectively in ministry. Perhaps our past efforts have focused too much on abstracts and not enough on the practical demands of ministry.

Finally, General Conference delegates must make sure that future training is designed to benefit the entire denomination and not just one part of it. We're too small to have five regional schools and if we regionalize our approach to pastoral training we'll damage the effectiveness of the Advent Christian Church in the twenty-first century.

Training for pastors, missionaries, and church planters is an issue General Conference delegates cannot avoid. What happens this month in Charleston may go far in determining the future of the Advent Christian Church. □

Volume 35 Number 6

Advent Christian WITNESS

June 1985

FEATURES

Ten Truths About Tithing G. Roger Schoenhals 4
How does tithing affect our Christian lives? Some sound answers from the Bible

Money in Hand Joseph R. McAuliffe 8
Stewardship is an important aspect of Christian living. Some ideas for practicing good financial stewardship

Do You Ever Feel Like a Frog? Clayton Blackstone 10
Pastor Blackstone applies Ezra's teaching to our churches and our lives.

A Patchwork Quilt Penny Harker 13
Two years ago, the Chatsworth, California Advent Christian Church was ready to close its doors. Today God is using the church to reach men and women, boys and girls for Christ. Here's the exciting story.

Who Cares About the Cities? Harold Patterson 18
Jesus cares and so must we. By the year 2000, over half the world's population will live in cities. God calls us to minister to the cities by communicating Christ's love.

ON THE COVER

Good stewardship is a family affair. God entrusts us with time, talents, and finances to use in His service and for His kingdom.

Jim Whitmer photo

DEPARTMENTS

From the Editor 2

Review 20

Women's Ministries 22

Prayer Partnership 25

Mission Directory 26

10 Truths About Tithing

G. Roger Schoenhals

Thirty years ago my parents were camping in the Olympic National Park. On Sunday morning they drove to a little church in nearby Port Angeles (Washington). The pastor preached a simple message on Christian stewardship.

Driving back to their campsite, they talked about the sermon. That evening, in the quietness of the forest, they decided together to go beyond the tithe and begin giving a higher percentage to the Lord's work.

Economically, the decision didn't make sense. But they chose to do it anyway — cheerfully. And, according to my dad, they experienced a delightful sense of liberation. The practice continued from then on, the percentage ranging higher in later years.

But before you can go beyond the tithe, you've got to get the tithing habit. And that means a consistent practice of giving 10 percent of your income to the Lord's work.

But why 10 percent? Why not 5 percent? Why not "according to our means?" Is not tithing a legalistic carry-over from the Old Testament?

Whatever you think about this, read on and see how you react to these ten benefits of tithing. They're not new, but taken together they may be valuable as you sort out this issue yourself.

Tithing honors Scripture

In the book of Romans, when Paul wants to explain the meaning of faith, he refers his readers back to Genesis and the example of Abraham.[1] When James wants to illustrate what he means by Christian works, he points back to father Abraham.[2] And, when the subject of tithing comes up in the book of Hebrews, again we find Abraham.[3]

The word, "tithe," first appears in Genesis 14:20. Here, Abraham gives Melchizedek, the priest of God Most High, a tithe of what he had gained from his military victory. He appears to give it willingly and gratefully.

The practice of giving 10 percent to God was later established as part of the Mosaic Law.[4] We see it continuing throughout the Old Testament.[5] In the final book of Malachi we're told that failure to pay the tithe is nothing less than robbing God.[6]

In the New Testament, the subject of tithing appears in three settings: The Hebrews reference to Abraham and Melchizedek; Luke's description of the self-righteous Pharisee;[7] and the account of Jesus confronting the Pharisees about their scrupulous legalism.[8]

In this latter reference, Jesus refuses to condemn the practice of tithing. After denouncing the Pharisees for their failure to observe such weighty matters as justice, mercy, and faith, he tells them that in addition to doing these things they should continue to tithe. At least that's the implication.

While one may argue whether

the Bible actually commands tithing for Christians today, the believer who earnestly seeks guidance will be thankful for any direction the Bible provides. A biblical reference to the tithe is a welcomed sign post for those seeking help.

Tithing reveals obedience

The conscientious Christian who accepts the biblical pattern of tithing will perform that practice, believing he is honoring God. Thus, tithing can, and often does, reveal a sincere desire to obey the perceived will of God.

A man was about to be baptized. Just before being lowered into the tank, he grabbed his wallet out of his pocket and held it up. Everything went under but his money.

The obedient heart surrenders everything, including money. Tithing becomes a cheerful response to God's clear design that we invest in His cause.

Tithing expresses gratitude

As redeemed children, hopelessly in debt to our loving Father, we come to the Bible for guidance in knowing how to express our gratitude. Tithing is one outlet for us.

I once heard a college professor talk on the subject, "I Am In Debt." He had recently returned from a trip overseas and his topic made us wonder whether he was going to take a collection.

Instead, he spoke of his sense of gratitude and obligation to the many people who had helped him along the way. He said his only hope of repaying them for their many kindnesses was to follow their example and do unto others as they had done unto him.

The verse immediately preceding the Ten Commandments reminded the Israelites that God had graciously delivered them from bondage.[9] Then follows the list of specific responses He expected of them. It's as though God laid out some practical ways His children could appropriately say, "Thank you."

John said, "We love, because He first loved us."[10] The cheerful tither says, "I give to the Lord's work, because He has given so much to me. I give to Him because, though He was rich, for my sake He became poor.[11]

Tithing demonstrates faith

"Put your money where your mouth is." Tithing is a way of doing that. It helps us externalize and affirm our faith. When we rightfully place money in the offering plate, we proclaim, "I believe in You, Lord. I honor You as the God of creation, the God Most High."

Tithing also reveals our faith in God's provision. By giving money we could use for our own benefit, we consciously make ourselves a bit more vulnerable and dependent on God.

For one who hasn't practiced tithing, the leap can be terrifying. It requires an abundance of faith. Some people have felt more comfortable working up to a tenth, adding a percentage or two each month.

After pay day, my wife and I write our first check to the Lord's work. By putting this "obligation" at the top of the list we are always able to meet that commitment. If we run out of money before the other bills are paid, we deal with that necessity as best we can. Sometimes we borrow money, sometimes we adjust our plans and do without. Who are we to trifle with God's work by putting our tithe at the bottom of the list?

Tithing recognizes rightful ownership

You and I occupy this globe as stewards of God's creation. But how do we express this stewardship when it comes to the weekly or monthly inflow of money? Tithing is a simple, methodical way to help us keep the record straight. Each time we give God the "first fruits" of our labors we affirm His lordship and our servanthood. Scripture tells us that the tithe is the Lords.[12] While all things belong to Him, He apparently lays special claim to that first 10 percent of our gain. However we understand this, we dare not take it lightly.

Tithing protects worthy priorities

Jesus said, "Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."[13] If you regularly invest in a program, an institution, or a material possession, you will find yourself gaining interest and commitment in that direction.

For example, if you purchase a motor home or a boat, you will begin to schedule your time to

use that possession. You will find ways to justify your investment.

The same is true of our investment in God's work. Our interest and commitment follows our pocketbook. The person who gives regularly to the church, will tend to be more involved in the various ministries of that church than the sideliner who only tosses in loose change now and then.

Faithful tithing is an insurance policy that helps protect our involvement in things that are truly important. Cheerful tithing helps keep us close to God.

Actually, the Lord is able to get along quite well without our tithes. He could easily place money in the coffers each month. But that's not his plan. He wants to involve us in His work. And, our wise heavenly Father knows that giving is good for us.

The New Testament contains stern warnings about the cancerous effects of riches.[14] We can easily be caught up in the pursuit of possession and lose grip on the less tangible, more important things of life. The regular practice of tithing helps us keep perspective, helps us renew our trust in God. In giving to God's work we declare our independence from the materialism around us.

Tithing provides needed support

Gracious giving underwrites the ongoing work of God's Kingdom. It was so in Old and New Testament times, and it continues to be God's way of financing His work today.

"Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse," thunders the Old Testament prophet.[15] No such exhortation is needed when the Holy Spirit gets hold of our wallets. Consider the spontaneity and generosity of the early church when the converts sold land and houses to have more money to give.[16]

The Bible tells us to support those who serve among us as ministers of the Word.[17] What a shame that so many Christian workers have to exist at the poverty line because the non-tithing people of God insist on pampering themselves and building their own earthly kingdoms.

Tithing offers a positive witness

In front of me, on a shelf, is an antique safe about five inches square. It was my dad's "tithe box" when I was a boy. I remember how he put money in there, and then took it out for Sunday and other giving opportunities. He never made a big deal about it, never told me, "You must do the same thing." He just followed through on his own conscientious pattern of systematic giving.

Through our giving we witness to our family and to those who are close to us. Ultimately, we witness to the world by how well we and other believers provide for the ministries of the Kingdom.

I once pastored a church in a small town. During my first year I discovered that the treasurer was occasionally unable to pay all the utility bills. More than once I refused my weekly salary so the basic bills of the church could be paid. I abhorred being known as the pastor of the church that didn't pay its bills. What a pathetic witness for the God who "owns the cattle on a thousand hills, the wealth in every mine!"

A positive witness of sacrificial giving encourages others in their own giving. Giving begets giving. Think of the impact of that poor widow who gave so sacrificially in the Temple.[18] Her story has been told a billion times!

Tithing unlocks blessings

The Bible makes a connection between giving and receiving. Abraham discovered this after he gave a tithe. We read: "Abram, I am a shield to you; your reward shall be very great."[19]

In Malachi, the connection is even more explicit: "Bring the whole tithe...and test me now in this, says the Lord of hosts, if I will not open for you the windows of heaven and pour out for you a blessing until it overflows."[20]

Jesus puts it like this: "Give, and it will be given to you; good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over...For by your standard of measure it will be measured to you in return."[21]

Paul echoes the equation in his second letter to the Corinthians: "He who sows sparingly shall also reap sparingly; and he who sows bountifully shall also reap bountifully."[22]

To the Philippians he writes: "I have received everything in full and have an abundance...and my God shall supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus."[23]

These Scriptures, and others, cause some to preach a gospel of prosperity. Live right, give right, and you will prosper in a material way. They tell us that God intends for his children to be healthy, wealthy, and wise.

Others perceive a deeper meaning. While they agree that sometimes God does seem to bless in material ways, they point to the

more universal experience of joy and liberty in the Lord. Selfless giving sets people free, whether they live in poverty or on easy street.

My own experience teaches me that I simply cannot out give God. In one way or another He more than makes up for any sacrificial gift I give.

I heard of a man who worked overtime just so he could have more money to give to the Lord's work. He delighted in giving. John Wesley got such a bang out of giving that he lived austerely on one tenth of his income just so he could give the other 90 percent away. He understood what Jesus meant when He said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive."[24]

When we give in order to get, our giving ceases to be "a fragrant offering, a fragrant aroma, an acceptable sacrifice."[25] We lose the deeper blessing God intends for us to have.

Those who live to give enjoy a spiritual high unknown to the "bean-counters." In giving, motive is everything.

Tithing pleases God

Before Abraham could sacrifice his son, God stopped him and provided a ram. He said, "Now I know that you fear God since you have not withheld your son, your only son from me."[26] What does the Lord think of us when we withhold our money, our only money from Him?

We honor God when we give joyfully. We say to Him, "I love you and I want to be Your partner in the great work of the Gospel. You can count on me to do my full share." God likes that! He "loves a

Continued on page 27

The Promise of the Tithe

Mary Ann Diorio

"Tithing is not an option; it's a command." My pastor's firm but loving voice pricked my conscience and stirred up old feelings of uneasiness. For several weeks, the Lord had been urging my husband and me to tithe, but fear had kept us from obeying His voice. What if, after tithing, we didn't have enough to pay our bills? What if an emergency came up? Surely, considering all of our financial responsibilities, we would be unwise to give ten percent of our income to our church.

Having experienced financial difficulties throughout my childhood, I was particularly sensitive to money shortages. Although my husband earned a good income, those old fears of financial lack still lurked in my subconscious mind, ready to attack me at the slightest sign of a money problem.

My husband struggled too. Although he had suffered less financial hardship than I, he also knew the material and emotional deprivation that comes from the lack of money. The son of a pipefitter and seamstress, he had watched his parents put in long hours of labor to support and educate their children. He had learned the value of a dollar and considered it foolhardy to give away any of his hard-earned money. But God would not give up. Clearly He was speaking to us again through our pastor's message.

A matter of trust

For several days my husband and I discussed God's command to tithe. We found all kinds of excuses and exceptions to the rule, but no matter how hard we tried, we couldn't escape the fact that if we called ourselves Christians, we had to obey and trust God. After all, had He not promised to supply the needs of those who tithe? Either we believed His Word or we didn't. Our actions would prove our faith.

Writing that first tithe check wasn't easy. Doubt and fear assailed us and nearly caused us to change our minds. But we were determined to trust God. Once we put our check in the offering plate, it was God's responsibility to meet our needs.

Three days after paying our tithe, we received a bill for services rendered several weeks earlier. My heart sank as I read the amount. But then I noticed a postscript: "Please disregard this bill. It is being sent merely as a formality. The amount owed is being written off." My heart leaped for joy as I suddenly realized that the amount of the bill was the exact amount of our tithe.

With great excitement, I phoned my husband at his office to share the wonderful news. Together we praised God for having proven His faithfulness to us. Now, eight years later, we can cite many instances of God's faithfulness. We no longer fear tithing; we welcome it as a great privilege and joy. □

Mary Ann Diorio is Editor-in-chief of Lampstand, *a magazine of Christian growth. She lives in Millville, New Jersey with her husband and two daughters.*

Scriptural principles for financial stewardship

Money in Hand

Joseph R. McAuliffe

Many, if not most Christians, are confused about how to manage finances. Articles in magazines, television programming, and radio talk-shows bombard us with information that often confuses more than clarifies. Money market accounts, I.R.A.'s, krugerrands, stocks, mutual funds, bonds, annuities, tax shelters, real estate, and N.O.W. accounts—all clamor for our attention and dollars. Adding to all of this in the Christian community is a barrage of appeals for worthwhile (or not-so-worthwhile) causes and conflicting teachings about prosperity or poverty.

The principles of financial stewardship discovered in the Old and New Testaments are consistent and trustworthy, regardless of the Dow Jones average, prime rate, or spot price of gold. Here are five principles, found in Scripture, which are fundamental to financial stewardship.

Budgeting

The first is *tithing*. To tithe is to give at least 10 percent of your increase (income) to God. This principle is first because Proverbs instructs us to "honor the Lord from your wealth and from the first of all your produce, so your barns will be filled with plenty" (3:9-10).

The tithe is one of the clearest expressions of stewardship in scripture. The first time the term is used is Genesis 14:20, where Abraham gave Melchizedek "a tenth of all." This act of stewardship was rooted in Abraham's faith that God is the "possessor of heaven and earth" (14:19). God is the ultimate owner of everything; nothing inherently belongs to any of us. We are stewards of God's possessions. So the tithe is our response of financial worship to God, a recognition of his sovereignty over all creation.

Through the tithe we acknowledge God's ultimate ownership of our possessions, that our wealth is a result of his blessing and power at work in our lives: "But you shall remember the Lord your God, for it is he who is giving you power to make wealth that he may confirm his covenant" (Deut. 8:18).

The second principle is the *careful management* of what you have, usually through the use of a good budget book or accounting system. Actually, this principle could have been mentioned first, because it helps you adjust and know how much you actually have, providing a way for getting your financial offering in good order.

All of us have a calling to be accountants over our personal finances. Someday each of us will be required to "give account of himself to God" (Rom. 14:12). This will include an account of how we handled money.

A budget book, faithfully and daily applied, enables one to set a monthly and yearly budget; to record, in the appropriate categories, all expenditures and investments; to identify spending patterns; to have an accurate tool for tax purposes. So a budget book gives us knowledge and control over our financial lives. Properly implemented, it will help us overcome the problem of always being short of cash yet never knowing where our money went.

I strongly recommend husbands and wives working together on the budget, including their children when they are old enough to understand. Set aside a half-hour once a week to review the budget, and use the budget review as a time to educate your children in financial responsibility. Since my wife and I have been doing this with our two daughters (ages 12 and seven years), we have noticed several changes in their approach to life.They are studying harder at school so they eventually will be able to make enough money to provide for their lives. They take better care of their possessions (clothes, furniture, toys), because they are aware of their costs. They even turn the lights off in a room when they leave, since they know about the increasing costs of electricity.

Generosity

A third principle is *generosity* in our offerings. The prophet Malachi exhorts us to be faithful in our offerings as well as tithes. "Will a man rob God? Yet you are robbing me! But you say, 'How have we robbed you?' In tithes and contributions. You are cursed with a curse, for you are robbing me, the whole nation of you!" (Mal. 3:8-9). Offerings are free-will gifts extended to those in need, not a fixed percentage like the tithe (10 percent).

The size of offerings will be determined by the leading of the Holy Spirit, our liberality, and our resources. Offerings may go to a variety of causes, such as the needy, missions, ministries we appreciate, educational programs, building drives, and so on. Through offerings, many churches have been able to adopt needy foreign families, set up abortion alternative clinics and food pantries, build schools and health centers and Christian counseling clinics. Our responsibility is to do good to all men in our giving but our priority must be with the household of faith (Gal. 6:10). I would recommend counseling with pastoral leaders before supporting a ministry you know little about. Also, withstand the pressure to give out of the guilt motivation that seems to accompany so many appeals for funds.

The fourth principle is to *stay out of debt*. Scripture admonishes us to owe no man anything except to love one another (Rom. 13:8). Debt deprives us of the resources needed to demonstrate God's love toward our family, brothers and sisters, neighbors. We live in a culture filled with debt. Our monetary system is no longer based on a tangible such as gold. Now it is based on the good faith (and debt) of our government. The total public-private debt amounted to over $27,000 for each American (children too!) by the end of 1983. The average American spends about 115 percent of his net income while consoling himself that it isn't as bad as the federal government, which spends nearly 145 percent of its revenues.

Debt is borrowing from the future to live for the present. Instead of sacrificing our futures (and more importantly our children's), we should obey scripture's injunction to defer gratification in the present in order to plan, build, and be prepared for the future. My advice is to:

- Avoid every form of consumer debt (clothes, appliances, furniture), purchasing only what you can afford.
- Cut up your credit cards if you don't use them responsibly. (That is, if you are not able to pay the entire statement by the due date. Otherwise, you pay 18 to 21 percent in interest rates.)
- Use wisdom and discipline in purchasing a house. Beware of fluctuating variable loan rates that have no ceiling, because interest rates could sky-rocket over the next few years. Keep house payments down to 20 percent of your income.
- Pay for your car in cash, or buy a good used one. New cars are the worst investment you'll ever make, unless you maintain the car for 10 years.

The future

The fifth principle is to *maintain a savings program*. The future belongs to God and his people, so begin preparing for it now. Western civilization has progressed economically beyond every previous civilization due to its faith in God and commitment to plan for the future. Even Japan, with a pagan religious faith, has made material progress because of its commitment to the future.

I recommend, when possible,

Continued on page 21

Do You Ever Feel Like a Frog?

Clayton Blackstone

"The text that fails to land with both feet in the 20th century fails."

The words are routered into my mind. The carpenter who etched them there has long been forgotten, yet the imprint of his effort continues to haunt me.

Application proves my greatest challenge. The discipline of bringing God's Word to bear on our culture remains taxing. The discipline of fleshing it out in my own life the only greater challenge.

My assignment in this article...to bring the book of Ezra in for a landing at the Advent Christian International Airport.

One hundred and twenty-five years of history lay behind us. The story of our contribution to the building of God's kingdom mingles failure and success. Like ABC Sports, we have been witness to the thrill of victory and the agony of defeat.

God calls us forward

Our analysis of Ezra's chronicle reminds us that God calls us forward. The glory of the past...a pleasant memory. The failure of yesterday...a painful reminder of our dependency on the One who sets us apart for His use. History, however, must not set the agenda for the present or the future.

Our culture issues the same call. Change invades our life like a fireworks display, sometimes with a bang and at other times a fizzle.

No amount of yearning, foot-dragging, or stubborn resistance can turn back the hands of time to "the good ol' days."

Not everything undergoes an evolutionary process. Our theology insists on a God whose nature never alters. His purposes remain constant. His Son the same yesterday, today and throughout eternity. The Scriptures continue to be the authentic revelation of God to us. These are, without doubt or apology, constants in a world that explodes with change.

These constants form the foundation for our contemporary calling. Yet, at times, our love affair with the past prevents us from romancing our culture with God's sonnet of love. At other times we allow our grief over failures past to envelope us in fear, preventing us from dreaming dreams and seeing visions.

Carl Henry is, and has been since his conversion, a visionary. Yet even he confesses that past experiences can hold us in a hammer lock. "Fifty years ago I had, as a young Christian, grand visions of the world impact of evangelical Christianity; as a time worn believer, I still dream at times [but]...it is difficult...to distinguish dreams from hallucinations."

Since the answers to the issues of our times proposed by secular thinkers don't generally cut it, our world waits. Our God calls. The issue that confronts us..How shall we respond?

Before I go any further, perhaps I'd better make a couple of observations so you don't think me presumptuous.

1. Discussions of what is wrong with Advent Christians generally ignore a larger issue...we share our problems with culture in general and the evangelical community in particular. To ignore this insures an unhealthy obsession with what is perceived to be our failure alone.

2. My observations are limited by my experience.

3. My proposals are not offered as "God's perfect will" for Advent Christians but as food for thought and a challenge to heighten the intensity of our quest to fulfill God's kingdom purpose for us.

The need for a vision

One hundred and twenty-five years ago, we stood almost alone in the proclamation of Christ's imminent return. Today the message rings from evangelical pulpits throughout the world.

Having lost this unique purpose, we are no longer driven by a common vision. (Many will argue that conditionalism is now that singular vision. From where I sit, condi-

tionalism may be the theological thread which holds us together, yet I would argue that it has yet to translate into a vision which compels us to dare great things for God.) We are not alone. Denominations are rapidly becoming cosmopolitan in their theological make-up, blurring the distinctives which once gave each a well defined purpose.

Without a Temple to build, we have only our past to preserve and an organization to maintain. But before I get specific, a glance at some trends facing the church in general might prove helpful. So with the assistance of the Christianity Today Institute, here goes!

1. We live in a culture that cannot or will not read. Therefore, the influence of the Bible will continue to decline.

2. Americans will continue to be conditioned to accept a world view that rejects the personal God of Scripture, asserts the autonomy and divinity of human beings, and rejects absolute authority in ethics due to the rise of Eastern and occult philosophies.

3. The need for Sunday Christian education classes will diminish and alternative educational experiences increase as America's population grows older.

4. We must face the question of whether to melt together or stand apart in the wake of increasing competitiveness between ethnic groups.

5. More women on the job means fewer women in the volunteer work force that use to sustain the church's activity.

6. Due to the amplification of self-fulfillment and success, we now see our needs and fulfillment as God's chief reason for existence.

Continued on next page

How to Live Like a Millionaire

W. James Smith

Sometimes I fly between cities and never feel like speaking to the passenger sitting near me. Then again there are times the flight is shortened by long, intense conversations with the stranger whom I never knew before and will never meet again.

On a recent flight from Kansas City to Seattle the plane was full. Every center seat usually vacant was filled. A young man in his thirties occupied the seat nearest me. As it turned out he was a Lutheran pastor living in Edmonds, Washington. He had never pastored a church since graduating from seminary. His appointment had been that of a fund raiser for various ministries of the church. At that time he was raising funds for a home that took in battered and abused children.

It was from our conversation I jotted down the title: *How to Live Like a Millionarie* or *How to Have Fun with Your Money.*

Have you ever dreamed of how much fun it would be to have a lot of money to give away? What if...by some divine miracle my name was drawn as the recipient of a million dollars? As a result, I could live like a millionaire. I'm sure there are millionaries who do not enjoy what they have. But I want to be different. I want to have fun with it. Is there fun in having anything unless it can be shared and enjoyed by others? Now let me see...how would I like to share this new found wealth?

As I look over the Advent Christion Church, where could I have the most fun with it? Wouldn't it be wonderful if every pastor was given a down payment on a home of their own? Or maybe allow for several church planters to go into a new area with a multiple staff to begin a new work for the saving of the lost. Wouldn't it be fun to send a check of several thousand dollars to the Chatsworth Lake Church to help pay off their $300,000 land purchase? It would also be fun to send some money to students studying for the ministry.

Before I get too carried away and lose touch with reality altogether, I had better remind myself I am not a millionaire. My total salary, as the Western Region Superintendent, is $22,000, including all fringe benefits. However, **I may not be a millionaire but I can still have fun with my money.** Oh, I may not be able to give the thousands of dollars I would like, but I could give what I could give.

When people are hurting...lost...lonely...or hungry, the ten percent of the Lord's tithe and the additional that I could call my offering together with others like myself could make a large difference in the area of ministry the Lord has put us. It could be the same as several millionaires all having fun with their money. Perhaps too, we could have more fun than we are having with our money if we could live more simply so that we would have more to give and that could even double our fun. □

W. James Smith is Regional Superintendent for the Western Advent Christian Association.

7. We are fast becoming a church who asks God, "What will you do for me soon?" Since we tend to calculate every move to maximize personal benefit, the escape from responsibility for the weekend will increase, leaving the church to struggle with a semblance of continuity.

8. Given the technological and depersonalized nature of our society, there is a corresponding rise in the value attached to interpersonal relationships.

9. Because of the search for a spiritual experience, churches which forthrightly address the supernatural dimensions of Christianity will have the greatest impact. [1]

With these observations in mind, I take a deep breath and step off the diving board. Here is my grand vision for the future: That we function as a fellowship of people committed to bringing a message of hope to people, who feel increasingly alone in our high tech world, and to living out the principles of his kingdom in full view of a humanistic society. Our commitment springs from our conviction that Jesus will soon return to establish his eternal kingdom.

A change in attitude

Sorry to disappoint you! You were hoping for something with a little more pizzaz, weren't you? A new program perhaps? A quick fix for a declining membership? A gimmick to stir excitement? A boost in the budget?

No, you'll not find a great deal that's new in my vision for our future. The purpose of the Church is one of the things that stays constant.

What we do need to change is our attitude. Two denominational dispositions prevail which affect how we minister to our culture. First, some of us glory in being a "peculiar" people. (Lest you think my analysis too harsh, this perspective is heard by Dr. Clyde Hewitt in *Responsibility and Response*, p. 15) Coupled with our forefathers' love for debate, the spirit of pride can only be a step or two away. Dr. Hewitt observes that "the debate heritage and mentality, even if it was designed to proclaim truth, made it difficult for many Advent Christians to see themselves called to be a loving and serving people." (2)

Pastor Dave Ross from Presque Isle, Maine comments that, "pride is the primary sin of the church (not just the Advent Christian Church either)... We have much to learn about graciousness."

If the *Lord* of the Church is to assign us additional responsibilities in the advance of His kingdom, we must repent of the spirit of pride and exclusiveness that infects us. I like to be as right as much as you do (more, according to my wife!). Yet, I have been convicted in recent weeks that being right with the wrong attitude is obnoxious to God. We must turn from our sin and seek to nurture a spirit of graciousness towards those who differ with us.

A need for confidence

A second attitude needing correction...our loss of confidence. Doing things through the strenthening power of Christ these days is more theory than fact.

The suspending of operations at Berkshire Christian College only adds to the perception that God is only doing great things in other churches and denominations. Today the unspoken questions in the hearts of many Advent Christians are, "What's next to go? Do we have a future? Does it make any sense to invest any more time, money, and energy in a sinking ship?"

Advent Christian people need to drink deeply of the God of the impossible. It is the only refreshment for sagging spirits. With our sense of the greatness of the living God blurred, I issue a call to worship at His footstool until our faith finds renewal, and we can once again run without growing weary.

Donald Barnhouse tells of returning to preach to the students of Princeton Seminary twelve years after his graduation. Following his sermon, Dr. Robert Dick Wilson, one of the great, intellectual giants at the seminar, came to speak to him.

"If you come back again I will not come to hear you preach. I only come once. I am glad to see that you are a "big godder." When my boys come back, I come to see if they are "big godders" or "little godders."

Barnhouse asked him to explain.

Wilson continued, "Well, some men have a little God and they are always in trouble with Him. He can't take care of the inspiration and transmission of Scripture to us. He doesn't intervene on behalf of His people. They have a little God and I call them "little godders."

A desire for faithfulness

"Then there are those who have a great God. He speaks and it is

Continued on page 17

A Patchwork Quilt

Penny Harker

Precious scraps of fabric patiently pieced together by skilled hands form a useful item: a patchwork quilt. Bits and pieces of cloth cut from worn-out clothing masterfully sewn together, each tiny shape fitted into its special place, creates not only a warm blanket but an object of art.

Quilting is a means of recording history, preserving memories of loved ones and friends. The colorful bedcovers became highly prized as pioneer women took pride in their patterns and workmanship. Hundreds of designs evolved, each representing some significant event or memory in a family's life: The Log Cabin, Double Wedding Ring, Lone Pine Tree, Grandma's Flower Garden, and Flying Geese. No event was too insignificant. Each pattern, each scrap of cloth would forever hold together a type of historical family album to recall happy memories of yesterday.

Chatsworth Lake Community Advent Christian Church near Los Angeles, California is much like that patchwork quilt. In this small community, precious individuals come to know the Lord. Lives are being changed forever. A network of people spreads out to form a church body. Many people from varied lifestyles fitted together, each with his special place. A patchwork of people sewn together by God's Spirit to form a useful body to serve Jesus Christ and spread the good news of salvation.

Our new beginning

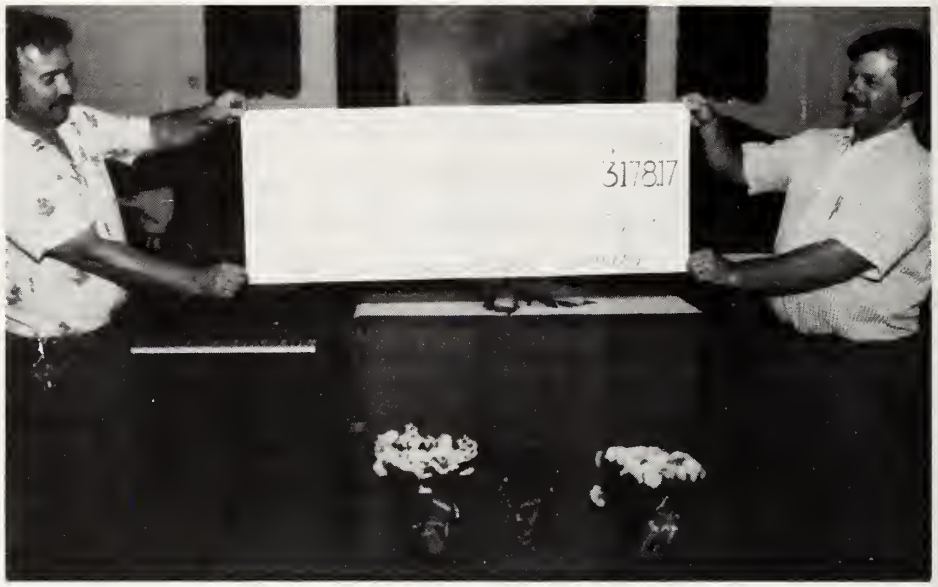
Our "New Beginning" started before our former pastor retired in August, 1984. After unsuccessful attempts to find a replacement for him, we believed that in all likelihood, our church would be closed due to poor attendance. Our numbers had dwindled to about six families and two or three singles in regular attendance. Two of the six families included the retiring pastor and wife and their daughter and her family. We sadly waited the notice of closure by the Southern California Conference.

What we didn't know was that God had already selected the perfect pastor for this community and His plan had been in effect months before. John Palmer, a God-filled man, visited representing the Conference. Instead of serving the dreaded closure notice, he surprised us by offering conference help wherever needed. This help comes in the form of a series of interim pastors and the offer to bring us a full-time pastor. Praise God! In

Chatsworth Lake Community Church in Chatsworth, California

a series of nothing-short-of-miracles, Pastor Paul Halloran stepped into the pulpit at Chatsworth Lake on August 3, 1985, one year to the day our previous pastor had retired.

During that long year, the few members recommitted themselves to do whatever they could do to generate interest within the community and get people involved. People began to take notice of the tiny chapel with the help of interim pastors: Harry Gay, Pete Vinning, Brad Rigney, and Mark Collins. The original core of thirteen people worked together to stimulate interest with a variety of programs and events including movies, ice cream socials, community barbecues, and the now-renown "Great American Bean-Off." A special Easter service introduced the community to Pastor Halloran.



Pastor Paul Halloran and Dick Harker accepting check after first fund-raising activity for "God's 4.3 Acres."

Pastor Paul Halloran

Pastor Paul Halloran, his wife Valerie, and their three children lead the first full-time ministry at Chatsworth. The Southern California Conference offered a subsidy to pay his salary for three years with a 20% cutback each year until we could support him ourselves. Without this financial help, this ministry would never have taken place! Within three months of Pastor Paul's arrival, the church faced a major decision. The property surrounding the chapel was to be developed into thirteen homes. This 4.3 acre development would totally cut off any hope for growth for a church seated on a postage-stamp-sized lot with no parking. (We were already using the adjoining property for parking.)

The first challenge

Pastor Paul met with the landowner/developer in October and convinced him to sell us the land. The price tag was $300,000. The developer gave us until February, 1986 to purchase the land. Again, our Southern California Conference stepped in to loan us $65,000 of the $75,000 down payment to secure the property. The chapel members raised $10,000 within several weeks. After much prayer, the decision was made to purchase the land. On May 19, 1986 the Chatsworth congregation closed the purchase of 4.3 acres. The property is to be paid for within the next three years. The first payment due May 1987 is $125,000 plus interest. The congregation must also start repaying the loan to the Conference. This has been a giant step of faith for everyone. Prayer continues daily for God to meet our needs. Without this land, there could be no church here.

God blesses people's faith and work

The past eighteen months has seen our patchwork church body grow. Many wonderful individuals are coming to know Christ as their Savior and dedicating themselves to His work in Chatsworth. Pastor Paul has baptized 24 and received over 54 into membership. Average Sunday attendance is in the high 70's. Several times we've had over 100 in a chapel that seats 94! We went to two services starting Easter Sunday. Lives are being changed as people come to know the Lord.

For example

Bob and Sally Kielas are two such individuals. A week after Pastor Paul's arrival, their son in his twenties died tragically. The

Kielas felt that this church was the place they wanted to lay their son to rest. God touched their lives that day. They've been with us ever since. It's wonderful to see God work in tragic circumstances, turning sorrow into a love for the Lord. It has been a real joy and blessing to have Bob and Sally with us.

Sally has taken over the kitchen responsibilities, planning for our outreach events, fund-raisers, and get-togethers with expertise. Bob is committed to arriving early each week to prepare the Chapel and grounds for services.

The Kielas have added to the patchwork with their network of friends by introducing longtime friend, Dorothy Abrams to the Chapel. Dorothy and her husband, Keith, own a demolition business. They've donated many items for building improvements including a fine used-brick barbecue and matching planters. They're now scouting for air-conditioning units for the chapel to install before our hot California summer arrives. Dorothy types and prints the Sunday bulletins and programs and serves as our women's fellowship group secretary, offering her home as a meeting place.

Jean and Monte Taylor, another couple from the Kielas' circle of friends, designed and ran a booth during our Harvest Fiesta. Jean helps with the Bean-Off, boutique, Conference luncheon, and is now chairing our rummage sale. Beth Noah, Toni Hopka, Courtney and Linda Hunt, Gregg and Carol Woods, Kent and Marti Amos are other people who worship with us through this network. These folks help wherever needed. Events, cleaning, preparation and painting the church, mowing the lawns, refreshments for Sunday fellowship—always someone to fill the need.

Chatsworth '86 Highlights

Highlights for 1986 and Jan. — March, 1987 include:
weekly meetings of home Bible study groups
men's and women's fellowship groups
twice weekly Empower meetings
(a support group for substance abuse)
monthly newsletters
workparties
fellowship barbecues and activities
three major fund-raising/community outreach events
representatives at all conference activities
Spiritual Gifts Workshops
Easter Service & Brunch, 100 in attendance
Rummage sale meeting over $3,100 for the land
"Pennies For Property" now nearing $10,000
Community seminar on "Street Protection"
"Great American Bean-Off & Country Fair with over 1,000 attending
Christian films
Harvest Fiesta with 600 plus attending offering the community
an alternative to the dark side of Halloween
a Christmas holiday boutique
Thanksgiving service with recognition to outstanding individuals
Lord's Birthday Celebration — 113 attending
Christmas songfest with dinner at local restaurant
This restaurant was a former bar and drug hangout for the community.
Helped 6 needy families (18 people) with food, toys and clothing
Hosted the Southern California Annual Conference Meeting
serving over 125 people

Bob and Sally Kieles

The Roy-Foreman connection

Another block in our quilt is the Roy-Foreman Connection. Rob and Marilyn Roy have lived in the com-

Joe Foreman and Brian O'Dea enjoying activities during the "Great American Bean-Off" and County Fair.

munity for years. When they joined the Chapel, new interest was kindled within their families. They spread the excitement to Margaret Foreman, Rob's sister. She and husband, Joe, started attending. With them came good friends and neighbors, Ernie and Lois Hill. The Hills brought their daughter Sharron Blankenship and her family.

The Foreman's son-in-law, Brian O'Dea, found Jesus as his Lord and Savior through Pastor Paul. Brian has a real testimony of salvation. After being involved in the dark world of drugs, losing his wife and family and almost his life, he accepted Jesus as his personal Savior. He attended services and home Bible study groups regularly. Prayer was offered for the restoring of Brian's family. God restored his wife and children to him and blessed his request for a way to support his family. He became a partner in a salmon fishing industry and has shared financially from this thriving business as well as giving time to God's work. Through Brian, many of his friends and former drug abusers have found Christ and regularly worship at the Chapel.

Pennies for property

Joe Foreman traveled around the community last April gathering items of furniture, clothing, and "white elephants" for a rummage sale. During this two-day rummage sale Joe's "Pennies for Property" crusade originated. After hearing what a sister church in San Diego was doing to raise money for the Penny Crusade for Missions, Joe decided to raise money for the land purchase. He collected over $1,900 in pennies during the sale. He told each customer of the church, Pastor Paul, and the land. He invited them to worship with us and with a smile offered to relieve them of their pocket change. To date, Joe has collected over $8,000 towards property debt reduction. He just celebrated his 70th birthday. He requested that in lieu of gifts, pennies be brought. $650.00 was presented to the Chapel from gifts given during his birthday celebration.

Precious lives continue to be pieced together to form a heavenly blanket to warm and protect those in the family of God. May we all continue to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. □

Penny Harker serves as Church Clerk at Chatsworth Lake Community Advent Christian Church in Chatsworth, California.

Joe and Margaret Foreman at his "Pennies for Property" booth.

 Continued from page 12

done. He commands and it stands fast. He knows how to show Himself strong on behalf of those who fear Him. You have a great God, and He will bless your ministry!" (3)

A part of attitude transformation flies in the face of popular secular and (to our shame) current evangelical thought. Our value in Kingdom expansion and our worth in the eyes of God is not measured by the size of our congregations, the rate of baptisms per church, or the size of our budgets.

Dave Roper, pastor of a community church in Boise, Idaho, suggests that, "we all get an occasional yen to move on to bigger things. Bigger is somehow better in our minds, although it shouldn't be. In God's eyes there are no little places and there are no little people. Therefore God's will isn't always upward mobile and a call to something bigger isn't necessarily better and it isn't necessarily a call from Him."

"...Do you seek great things for yourself?' Jeremiah asks. "Seek them not!' (Jer. 45:5) If prominence is to be our lot then it will come about because God himself chooses it for us and not because we do. Jesus told his disciples that places of honor belong to those for whom they have been prepared. (Mk. 10:4)"

In the meantime it seems we should grow and flourish where we have been planted..." (4)

Dave wrote these words to pastors struggling with the temptation of calling it quits. Yet the words cut to the quick of our denominational struggle. We are not a major force in the evangelical community. Unlike E.F. Hutton, not everyone listens when we speak. Most of our churches are small. We have no super-churches under our banner. No television ministry to wave the denominational standard.

We could possess them all and still be found wanting by the First and the Last, who died and came to life again. You might wish to read the early chapters of Revelation to check this out for yourself, but here's a nugget worth pondering...the congregation which received the most positive assessment is the one we would consider unsuccessful (Smyrna) and ones judged as needing repentance (Ephesus and Laodicea) we mark as successful and worthy of emulation.

Our call...to be faithful "underrowers" of the *Lord* of the Church. To quote Dave Roper again, "The shape that our ministries take, the size to which they grow, the speed with which they develop is solely his prerogative."

Focusing our blurred vision

Me thinks we try too hard. On second thought, perhaps I'd better clarify. We often try too hard for the wrong things and for the wrong reasons. It's time to adjust the lens of our mind. Our blurred vision of a great God who calls us to great tasks must be brought into focus.

Our call to faithfulness must never be taken as an excuse for piddlin' visions and lackluster dreams. Our commitment to life in Christ alone is not a synonym for smallness. Some may take my call to faithfulness as contentment with the status quo. Quite the opposite! I suspect that we cannot be both faithful and content with things as they are.

The issue at the heart of my call to faithfulness...motivation. With a defective self image it's tough to do everything for the glory of God. We see the things He is calling us to as ways of boosting our sagging egos. Rates of baptism, budgets, and new buildings can become monuments to us mortals rather than shrines to our Sovereign.

We have failed in the past. In those times when failures grew out of sin, let us repent and move in the opposite direction. If the miscarriage came about because of errors in judgment, let us learn from our mistakes and go on.

God calls us to a great task. It demands the best we can be in the power of His Spirit. John Mason Brown acknowledged that "Existence is a strange bargain. Life owes us little' we owe it everything. The only true happiness comes from squandering ourselves for a purpose."

"Do you ever feel like a frog?"

I heard Chuck Swindoll use these lines in a sermon several years ago. Somehow they seem a fitting conclusion to this epistle.

"Do you ever feel like a frog? Frogs feel slow, low, ugly, puffy, droopy, pooped. I know, one told me. The frog feeling comes when you want to be bright but feel dumb. When you want to be thankful but you feel resentful. When you want to share, but you're selfish. When you want to be great, but you're small. When you want to care, but you're indifferent."

"Ever had those feelings? They're called frog feelings. At one time or another each one of us has found himself on a lily pad, floating down the great river of life...frightened,

Continued on page 27

Who Cares for the Cities?

Harold Patterson

"Jesus wept!" (John 11:35). This was one of the first Scriptures many of us memorized in our youth because it was so short. Jesus wept at the grave of Lazarus before He raised him from the dead. He is also recorded as weeping before Calvary (Hebrews 5:7). The Bible tells us He also wept over Jerusalem (Luke 19:41). He was concerned about their lostness and the judgment to come upon them.

We can read this same concern in His lament over Jerusalem recorded in Matthew 23:37, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you, how often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing.!" Yes, Jesus wept over the thousands of lost people in the city of Jerusalem. Oh, that we might have the heart of Jesus!

The rapid growth of cities

One of the great phenomenons of our day is the rapid growth of world cities. There are presently 2,400 cities in the world of at least one hundred thousand persons and 286 with over a million in them. That number will increase to 500 by the year 2000. By the turn of the century, for the first time in history, the world will have a majority of its population living in its cities. Already, seventy-five percent of Americans and Canadians live in cities. One mission researcher has said, "The greatest mission surge in history has missed the greatest migration in history, the migration of rural peasants to great mega cities."

The cities have become the great mission field of our world. Dr. Raymond Bakke, an authority on Urban Ministries has said, "All roads lead to Rome, but so do all the sewers." As people flock to the cities, they bring with them their weaknesses, their fears, their poverty, their desperation, their broken dreams, and their aloneness. The rising crime rate, all types of sexual perversions, teenage pregnancy, drug addiction, disillusionment with society, poverty, disease, and racial hatred all combine together in the cities for a powerful and volatile mix.

Go to the cities and proclaim the Gospel

Jesus always ministered to the needy and there is no greater need than among the populations of the cities of our world. For some Christians, as they view with fear the troubled cities, they perhaps would like to deal with them as God dealt with Sodom and Gomorrah, when perhaps what they need is to have the attitude of Abraham who would cry out to spare the city if there were ten righteous in it.

I heard a black Home Missions pastor say that, "it was easier for a black man to hear the gospel and be saved in Africa than in the inner cities of this country." The abandonment of much of evangelical Christianity of the city plus the influx of Asian refugees are filling our cities with other religions. I have seen Muslim mosques and Hindu temples being erected in our cities.

The new Testament strategy

that Paul used was to go to the cities to preach the gospel. He would pass through many small towns to get to the cities to preach. He saw that there were many more people there who were able to be reached in the city and that if the rural people came into the cities to shop and trade, they would hear the gospel and carry it back home. This was a means of more rapidly spreading the gospel. When Jesus sent out the twelve and the seventy, He sent them out to the cities (Matthew 10:23).

We need a concern for the hundreds of thousands, even millions, who are without Christ in our cities. Too many of us are like Jonah who was more concerned over the loss of his comforts than over a city of over six hundred thousand people. God showed Jonah and He needs to show us that we must be concerned about cities! I felt a little of this burden when I stood in the city of Ensenada, Mexico, a city of over five hundred thousand. A young Mexican pastor told me there were less than two thousand evangelical believers in that city.

How do we reach the cities?

What can we do to reach the cities? I believe that we must begin in the spirit of prayer. Pray for our cities and for their salvation. Pray for a change of attitude concerning our ministry in the cities. Many churches in the city are seeking only to survive and not to reach out to the changing population around them.

We need to pray for a change of attitude toward those who minister in the inner city. For many, only those missionaries who serve across the sea are viewed as "true missionaries" while those who serve in our cities are viewed differently, almost questioned as to why they are serving there.

We need to pray for a change of attitude concerning those who are "not like us." If you are white, you need to pray for a greater love for blacks and others not like you. If you are black, you need to pray for a greater love for Hispanics and Asians and so on. Jesus Christ died and God has a ministry to all peoples.

We need to explore ways to develop vital ministries in the cities, whether starting with Bible studies in inner-city homes, branch Sunday schools, or developing social-helping ministries, such as tutoring, food distribution, counseling, and day care. We need to tell these lost and troubled people that Jesus Christ cares for them in a way expressed in an old hymn:

"Does Jesus care when my heart is pained too deeply for mirth and song: As the burdens press, and the cares distress, And the way grows weary and long?"

"Does Jesus care when my way is dark with a nameless dread and fear? As the daylight fades into deep night shades, does He care enough to be near?"

"O yes, he cares; I know he cares, His heart is touched with my grief; When the days are weary, the long nights dreary, I know my Savior cares."

There are thousands who do not know this and need to hear. We need to consider the establishment of more mission outreaches to ethnic communities within our cities. We need to disciple urban young people to reach their peers for Christ.

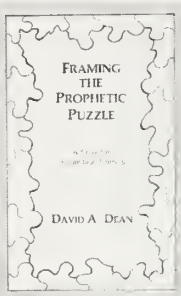
Who will go?

Who will do this? Pray that God would raise up laborers for the harvest in our cities. Men like D.L. Moody, who was burdened for the Chicago of his day lest some great judgment should come upon them and them not be saved. We need to pray that the Lord would raise up or send to us ethnic leaders who would minister to communities that they are culturally a part of. We need to pray for people who will become burdened for this kind of ministry. One urban missionary wrote, "It is far easier for churches to give thousands of dollars than to find one of their members who would walk into the slums for a decade." We need to add our feet and finances to our prayers to make this a reality in our inner cities.

I remember when I did gospel work in Roxbury and Cambridge years ago, an urban missionary told me this story. "A veteran inner city missionary was riding through a deprived area with a young lady who was a new missionary recruit. Looking out of the window of their vehicle, the young lady exclaimed, 'Oh, look

Continued on page 21

An Easy-to-read Guide for Interpreting Prophecy



Evangelical Christians hold special interest in Biblical prophecy. As people who believe the Bible, we are mindful of Jesus command to "Keep watch, because you do not know the day or hour" of his coming.

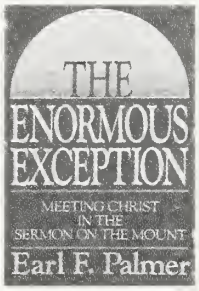
With all of the interest in prophecy, little has been written for busy pastors and laypeople on proper methods for interpreting the prophetic statements of Scripture. The result? Many can not discern when a prophetic teacher or writer has stretched the Bible to match their preconceived notions or exotic interpretations.

Framing the Prophetic Puzzle by Dr. David A. Dean (Lenox, Massashusetts; Himes Publications; $3.25) provides a needed guide for Christians interested in understanding prophecy for themselves. Dr. Dean cuts through much of the confusion surrounding prophecy and provides principles we can use not only for interpreting prophetic passages but in evaluating the interpretations of others.

According to Dr. Dean, "This volume offers you practical instructions to help you start studying prophecy. It reminds you that much prophecy is simpler than you think. It outlines procedures for dealing with symbols and time calculations. It points to a framework into which all the prophecies will fit. And it highlights the crowning jewel of Scripture's predictions: Christ's return."

Dr. Dean has not written an exhaustive guide for professional theologians, but an introductory guide for ordinary Christians who want to find answers for themselves. *Framing the Prophetic Puzzle* will be helpful to laymen and pastors wanting a simple, easy-to-understand guide for interpreting Biblical prophecy.

The Sermon on the Mount: Comfort and Demand



Three words describe the reactions most people have to our Lord's Sermon on the Mount: Comforting, demanding, and confusing. How do we square the comfort of Jesus admonition about anxiety with the command to love our enemies? Why would Jesus command his followers to hide their devotion and piety?

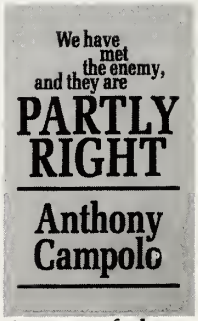
Earl Palmer wrestles with these questions and many others in his challenging new book *The Enormous Exception: Meeting Christ on the Sermon on the Mount.* Recognized as an outstanding Bible scholar and expositor, Rev. Palmer argues that there's a "meaningful and essential connectedness within the sermon so that the crises posed in one part of the sermon work toward a powerful question or resolution in another part of the text."

Not only does he help us see the whole picture, Rev. Palmer focuses our attention on the foundation of the sermon: Jesus Christ himself. The sermon on the Mount makes no sense apart from the Lordship of Jesus Christ. The sermon's words gain meaning for us only when we view them in the context of His authority over our lives.

While the book demonstrates awareness of Biblical and theological difficulties and questions, its focus is on practical matters of the Christian life. Each of the 15 chapters is short, well written, and concise. Readers will especially appreciate the three chapters that concentrate on the Lord's Prayer. The chapter dealing with the relationship of the Old Testament law to Christ's ministry cleared up several lingering questions for this reviewer.

Earl Palmer enables us to see that the Sermon on the Mount is not a series of impractical, impossible demands presented by someone out of touch with reality. The sermon's goals are realistic and achievable if we keep our focus on Jesus Christ. Pastors wanting to preach on the Sermon on the Mount will find *The Enormous Exception* full of helpful ideas and commentary for understanding and communicating the text. Laypeople will find it easy to follow and filled with practical help for Christian living.

Learning From Our Enemies



Dr. Anthony Campolo ranks as one of my favorite authors. Why? Because his writings force me to think about my Christianity in new, creative ways. Dr. Campolo is one of those rare people who can relate a strong

evangelical Christianity to what students, professors, and intellectuals study in today's university setting. He is comfortable debating in the halls of Harvard University or in speaking to the youth group in your local church.

We Have Met the Enemy and He is Partly Right (Word Books $12.95) looks at what Christians can learn from Sigmund Freud, Fyodor Dostoyevsky, Karl Marx, Soren Kirekegaard, and other thinkers who have impacted our world in the last one hundred and fifty years. To ask what Christians can learn from Sigmund Freud and Karl Marx will automatically anger some, but Campolo is never afraid of controversy. In fact, Campolo's analysis of Marx, Freud, and the other thinkers discussed deserves to be read by Christians because he communicates better than anyone else I've read what motivated their ideas and thought.

But this book is more than analysis of Marx, Freud, et al, and what lessons they have for us. Dr. Campolo also shares an upbeat, optimistic view of Christianity among the American middle class and attributes that optimism to our ability to learn even from our critics. "When all is said and done," Dr. Campolo writes, "I believe that middle-class Christianity is on the verge of its greatest days..."

This latest work from Dr. Campolo's pen is for those who want to be intellectually challenged. Students and others who are being exposed to new intellectual ideas or who are struggling with their Christian faith will enjoy this work from a man who believes that Christianity can withstand any intellectual challenge thrown at it. □

Money in Hand From page 9

allocating 15 percent of your income towards building a sound savings program. We should have short term (zero to three years), intermediate (three to 10 years), and long term (10 plus years) investments, depending on our ages. I.R.A.'s are also a very good investment. (Probably the worst place to save is in passbook savings accounts.)

The only way these principles can affect our lives is if we are faithful, not giving into the temptations of materialism. Paul tells us that "It is required of stewards that one be found trustworthy" (2 Cor. 4:2). Be faithful in the principles of budgeting, tithing, generous giving, staying out of debt, saving and working hard. Jesus tells us that the degree to which we are faithful in the use of money is the degree to which our heavenly Father will entrust true riches to us. Successful stewardship of money is the beginning point of maturity and a goal within the grasp of all Christians. □

Joseph McAuliffe is editor of BusinessGram. *He and his wife Kay and their four children recently moved from Bowling Green, Ohio, to Tampa, Florida, where he is pastor of the newly formed Tampa Covenant Church.*

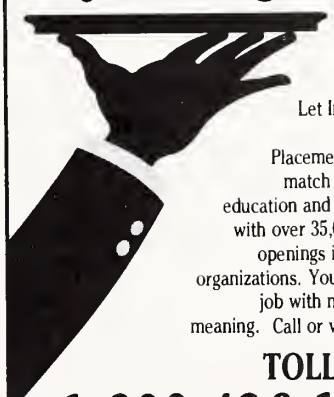
Used by permission from Commonlife.

Who Cares for the Cities? From pg. 19

at those dirty children out there on the street corner. You would think someone would do something about them.' The veteran missionary responded, 'When the love of those children and the hate of dirt come together in one person there will be a change. And when the love of these people and the hatred for sin unite in one person, you have a missionary." I think this is still good advice today. Jesus still cares about our cities and we must care with the love and compassion of Jesus Christ. God give us a real burden for urban ministries!

A graduate of Berkshire Christian College, Harold Patterson serves as Director of World Missions for the Advent Christian General Conference.

35,000 JOBS at your fingertips!



Let Intercristo's Christian Placement Network match your skills, education and experience with over 35,000 current openings in Christian organizations. You can find a job with mission and meaning. Call or write today!

TOLL FREE
1-800-426-1342
Alaska, Hawaii, Washington and Canada call (206) 546-7330

Intercristo
The Career and Human Resource Specialists
19303 Fremont Avenue North
Seattle, Washington 98133

Name _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Publication _____ a division of CRISTA

Caroline Michael
Director

Tot-Stop

Brenda Story

Especially as a pastor's wife, I am aware of many ways God is working in my life. Everyday there are little miracles unfolding. I can feel the power of the Lord guiding my daily decisions. One such decision in my life was at the beginning of our ministry here in East Norwalk, Connecticut.

When we arrived in 1979, I had decided that I didn't want to find employment outside our home. But, the Lord had other plans for me! A dear friend in our church had been working in a nursery school where the need arose for a new teacher. My first reaction when she asked if I'd be interested was a flat "no." After praying about the matter, I decided to work until the director found someone else to handle the job. After just one week, I began to realize how much I loved working with those children. Imagine being paid for something you love to do! Then I prayed that another teacher would not be found so I could keep the job. The Lord answered my prayer.

After two years the director decided it was time for her to retire. What would I do now that the nursery school was closing? Through prayer the Lord revealed to me the possibility of a new ministry. During the two years I had worked at the nursery school, I had felt something was missing. As a Christian and as a mother, I realized how important it is for children to learn about and to know the love of God in their everyday experiences. How better to accomplish such a goal than through a "play group?"

By the next fall, the Lord began to open doors for a Christian ministry to young children. The official board and our church-at-large were in complete agreement that such a ministry should be started in our church. I began with a full enrollment almost immediately. The program was planned for two to four year-olds, a play-group lasting two and one half hours daily. It was exciting for me to have so many parents (outside our church) who were eager to have their children in a Christian play-group.

The Lord has blessed me through this ministry and He has also blessed the families who have had their children in the program. This ministry to children has proven to be a definite outreach for our church and the cause of Christ. We have seen some of the children become enrolled in our Sunday school. Some families have even shown active interest in the work of our church as well.

I am currently in my sixth year with the Community Advent Christian Church "Tot-Stop." Everyday God reveals to me His guidance as I deal with these young lives that are so precious in His sight.

Frequently people ask me if at such a young age I can really get across any "Christian" teaching. I say, "Sure!"

Young children are perceptive and open to the truth of God and His love for His creation. Often a parent will reveal how their child has learned something special. One mother recently remarked how much it meant to her when her two-year-old came to her, laid his head on her lap, and prayed before eating, "Thank you, God, for our food."

How we should thank God for the blessings of children. There have been other times when a child's retelling of a Bible story has caused a parent to reflect back on truths learned as a child.

I continue to pray that through their children, parents will realize their need for Christ and the church in their lives. I truly thank God for leading me into this ministry to children and I pray that He will be glorified through it. □

Brenda directs and teaches in the Tot-Stop program at the Community Advent Christian Church in East Norwalk, Connecticut where her husband is pastor. Robert and Brenda have two teenage children.

News and Notes

Alton Bay, New Hampshire

Seventy women from various walks of life met for a weekend retreat last fall using the theme, "Festival of Fashion, the Great Designer, God." It was the third annual retreat sponsored by the Eastern Regional WHFMS, Barbara Schaeffner, President.

Jan Carlberg, director of Christian services at Gordon College, was the featured speaker. Workshop leaders included Jean Taber, Pat Iriana, Linda Blazer, and Bea Moore. Former missionary in the Philippines Bessie Smith conducted devotions and communion.

There were care and share groups to build friendships and an elective handcraft time as well as an opening fashion show.

Alton Bay Women's Retreat

Tustin, California

Treat Kile and Loretta Shelton opened the annual meeting of the Southern California WHFMS Conference with a piano prelude and vocal solo. Janet Crook of Pasadena spoke about Mary and Martha based on Luke 10 where Mary chose "the better part, to learn of Him." She stressed the need to know God's Word, to pray, and to love before we can effectively serve Him.

Pastor Art Shoap sang "He Touched Me" before Pastor Bob Hett installed the officers: President Lillian Koehler, Vice-president Edna Carpenter, Secretary Sue Beardsley, and Treasurer Loretta Shelton.

Brunswick, Georgia

Thirty-two members attended the annual meeting of the Georgia WHFMS. A local Methodist pastor Joe Newton gave an inspiring portrayal of Caiaphas. The following officers were installed: President Janie Ross, Vice-presidents Marjorie Provost and Marilyn Hamilton, Secretary Jacqueline Overman, Treasurer Laverne Alford, and Auxiliary Superintendents Rhonda Worth, Nannette Jones, and Mildred Brown.

Ft. Payne, Alabama

Agnes Walters opened her home for the annual meeting of the Alabama WHFMS. There were delegates from Chattanooga, Hopewell, Stevenson, and Walnut Park churches. Delegates who attended the Southern Regional WHFMS convention included Lois Barham, Ruby Stephens, Willie Spraggins, Patricia Gross, and Betty Cyphers. Current officers are: President Betty Cyphers, Vice-president Nell Lassetter, Secretary-Treasurer Evelyn Carroll, Junior Action Superintendent Patricia Gross, and King's Jewels Superintendent Louise Chesnut.

Chicago, Illinois

The theme for 1987 for a new phase of women's ministries at Hope Church is "We Are Temple Builders." The emphasis is on building the inner self, their homes, and their communities. They are offering small group Bible study and prayer groups. Plans are developing for a spring luncheon and a fall retreat. Topics scheduled for the small groups include: "Why Am I Afraid to Tell You Who I Am?" "What Happens When Women Pray?" "Mastering Motherhood," "How to Study the Bible," and "The Christian and Prayer."

Mt. Olive, North Carolina

President Janet Jackson reported in the monthly newsletter of the Salem WHFMS that their women were blessed with the information shared with the group by TRP Peggy Boston. Peggy presented the workshop "Is Your Programming on Target?" and challenged the women with creative ways to present a program and to plan for an effective society.

Ridgeland, South Carolina

Sue Bennett used Scriptures from Isaiah 40 and 28 as she asked the women to consider "Changing Times and Learning from our Elders." Five South Carolina WHFM Societies were represented at their annual conference meeting in Ridgeland. National WHFMS President Marian Wrigley installed the officers: President Barbara Nobles, Vice-president Odessa Bryan, Secretary Eloise Robertson, Treasurer Joyce Brabham, and Auxiliary Superintendents Ann Grantham, Myrtle Lyons, and Lucille Williams.

CONNIE JONES
902 Hemlock Dr. NE, Lenoir, NC 28645

Our Heritage — Our Future

Leadership

When I was nine years old, attending the Boston Church, Mrs. Helen Keeney sang in the choir. Often she testified about blessings related to the India WHFMS work. As a young teenager, I went to an open house at the WHFMS headquarters in Brookline, Massachusetts. Clarissa Robbins showed me some of the curios missionaries had brought back from the various fields. The thoughts of these lands and cultures intrigued me. After I was married and a student at Wheaton Grad School, we had Elsie Towle as a dinner guest. She encouraged us to consider mission work. Each of these ladies had a heartfelt burden for missions which they communicated to others. Their zest and commitment to Christ's Kingdom influenced me as I sought God's will during those formative years. I'm grateful for ladies who exercised leadership — women whose talents were consecrated to God's work.

With General Conference only a few weeks away, I want to take time to express gratitude to Marian Wrigley for the warmth and competence she has brought to her office. Though limited by health problems, she has continued to challenge us with her spiritual vitality. This is also a good time to say "Thank you" to Caroline Michael for her calm, efficient leadership and her strong emphasis on personal evangelism and Christian growth. We have been blessed with good leadership over the past triennium. Please join me in thanking God for leadership that makes a difference.

Prayer

Prayer makes a difference. I remember standing in a prayer circle where Frank and Frances Toothe expressed their conviction that God was leading them to begin a work in the Philippines. Though I was very young, the earnestness of that prayer time was impressed upon my memory. While serving in Japan, Jack and I were repeatedly made aware that Christians at home were upholding us daily in prayer. How often we thanked God for the cards and letters that reminded us of that support! Rosa Horne, Marian Wrigley's mother, was one of those faithful correspondents. Her letters revealed her burden of prayer and love for missions. Later — while at Vernon Homes, we had the opportunity to introduce a Japanese Christian from the Kayashima church to Mrs. Horne. As we talked together, she opened one of her journals and found the man's wedding picture. With tears in his eyes, Mr. Nakashima said, "For years you've prayed for us. Now I'm going back to Japan, and I'll remember to pray for you." Yes, prayer makes a difference. It reaches across geographical and cultural barriers to make us one in Christ. Pray that we will be blessed with His divine guidance and wisdom as we meet together June 20th in Charleston.

Friendship

Christian friends make a difference. I'm looking forward to renewing old acquaintaince and forming new friendships at the convention. Come prepared to share the good things God is doing in your circles and conference fellowships. Be sure to inspire us with your creative and innovative ideas. Let's help each other become all that we can be for Christ's sake.

Stewardship

Stewardship makes a difference. In the fall of 1984 and early 1985, our WHFM societies raised $19,400 to help pull our denomination through a financial slump. Our 1986 giving to Christmas in October was the highest ever. Income from Penny Crusade continues to mount as whole churches unite in mission giving. In this new triennium I hope our faith will be stretched, our commitment deepened, and our stewardship increased that even greater things may be accomplished.

Yes, Christian leadership, prayer, friendship, and stewardship make a difference. They have enriched our heritage, strengthened our present, and will brighten our future as we give ourselves to excellence in service. □

Connie Jones is National WHFMS Spiritual Life Chairman.

TRPs Available in All Regions

Trained Resource Person Seminars have been held in all regions of our denomination within the past year. Nearly seventy-five TRPs are prepared to service your local WHFMS or women's group by presenting one of several workshops. To arrange for a TRP for your group, please send your request to the Department of Women's Ministries. Peruse the first folder in the current WHFMS program kit for further information.

Small groups interacting at the Western Regional TRP. (Above L-R) Carla Brooks, Sara Cruce, Caroline Michael, Luella Johnson, and Doris Bundy. (Below L-R) Janet Crook, Nancy Winslow, Donna Grant, and Linda Thompson.

The final TRP Seminar was held in Princeton, WV in April with women from each conference of the Appalachian Region. The Appalachian Director of Christian Education Joan Cole shared responsibilities in conducting the seminar with Director of Women's Ministries Caroline Michael.

We appreciate the willingness of each TRP to be involved in this ministry to our women.

Mission Prayer Partnership

June

19 **Praise** the Lord for the opening of our **General Conference. Pray** that the Lord will pour out His Spirit on all the Conference sessions.

20 **Pray** for **Mrs. Marion Wrigley** and **Mrs. Caroline Michael** and the WHFMS Convention today.

21 **Praise** the Lord for one hundred twenty-five years of ministry proclaiming the soon return of **Christ.**

22 **Pray** for God's will to be done in the business sessions of General Conference.

23 **Pray** for revival throughout the **Advent Christian Denomination** beginning among General Conference delegates.

24 **Pray** for God's protection upon those returning from General Conference.

25 **Pray** for the **Mission Advisory Committee** and their important work.

26 **Pray** for God's blessing upon the missionary children, particularly on **Timothy Jewett** on this his birthday.

27 **Praise** the Lord for the faithful ministry of **Bob Cole** with our denominational finances. **Pray** for a special blessing for him today his birthday.

28 **Pray** for **Austin** and **Dorothy Warriner** as they are involved in deputation ministry this summer.

29 **Pray** for the newly elected officers and committees of General Conference that God will give them wisdom in their new responsibilities.

30 **Pray** for **Marion Damon** as she teaches young pastors in our growing work in India.

July

1 **Pray** for **Lucas** and **Beulah Devasahayam** that God will provide for their needs in ministry in Malaysia.

2 **Pray** for **Frank** and **Judy Jewett** as they continue a growing ministry in Cebu in San Vincente Fellowship.

3 **Pray** for the coming campmeetings that God will move mightily in each of them.
4 **Praise** the Lord for our freedom of worship.
5 **Pray** for guidance for World Missions Director, **Rev. Harold Patterson** as he seeks to expand Advent Christian Missions.
6 **Pray** for **Alice Brown** and the exciting ministry that she is performing in the Philippines.
7 **Pray** for Nigerian superintendent, **E.K. Akpan** and the heavy responsibilities he carries.
8 **Pray** for **Margaret Helms** as she prepares to return to the work in the Philippines.
9 **Pray** for **David Vignali** and the important responsibilities that he carries in the Philippines.
10 **Praise** the Lord for **Steve** and **Ann Lay** and the vital ministry they have performed in Japan.
11 **Pray** for our retired missionaries that God would bless them with His grace and strength.
12 **Pray** for **Thambusamy** and **Victoria Devairakkam** and their expanding ministry in Malaysia.
12 **Pray** for **Floyd** and **Musa Powers** as they guide our Japanese work.
14 **Pray** for **Barbara White** and the important ministry that she carries on in India.
15 **Pray** for **Oro Bible College** and its growing ministry to our Philippine church.
16 **Pray** for **Beryl Joy Hollis** and her ministry in the city of Madras.
17 **Pray** for **Rev.** and **Mrs. Lee Welkley** that the Lord would continue to enlarge their Urban ministry in Jacksonville, Florida.

Mission Directory

INDIA

Barbara White (January 14)
Box 17, Andivilla
Kodaikanal 624101
INDIA

Beryl Joy Hollis (December 16)
American Advent Mission
Velacheri, Madras 600 042
INDIA

Marion Damon (March 27)
Box 17, Andivilla
Kodaikanal 624101
INDIA

JAPAN

Floyd Powers (October 8)
Musa Powers (February 28)
Rebecca Powers
(November 11, 1971)
1478 Shironomae
Mikage-Cho
Higashinada-Ku
Kobe 658
JAPAN

Steven Lay (November 28)
Ann Lay (September 13)
Beth Lay (March 26, 1975)
Timothy Lay (June 18, 1977)
3-2-35 Asukano Minami
Ikoma Shi, 630-01
JAPAN

MALAYSIA

Thambusamy Devairakkam
Victoria Devairakkam
Advent Christian Church
3A, Jalan Sayang Housing Trust
86000 Kluang, Johor
MALAYSIA

Lucas Devasahayam
Beulah Devasahayam
Advent Christian Bethel Church
30, Jalan Cempaka
Taman Gembira
42700 Banting, Selangor
MALAYSIA

PHILIPPINES

Frank Jewett (December 1)
Judy Jewett (January 29)
Danny Jewett (June 13, 1976)
Timmy Jewett (June 26, 1978)
Letitia Jewett (April 13, 1980)
P.O. Box 263
Cebu City 6401
PHILIPPINES

Alice Brown (March 24)
Box 223
Cagayan de Oro City 8401
PHILIPPINES

David Vignali (May 10)
P.O. Box 263
Cebu City 6401
PHILIPPINES

MEMPHIS MISSION

Francis Ssebikindu (May 13)
Lyne Ssebikindu (May 8)
Faith Nancy (September 28, 1982)
Ashley Grace (January 21, 1985)
2590 Faxon Ave.
Memphis, TN 38112

ON LEAVE

Bessie Smith (March 27)
Box 657, Waukewan Street
Meredith, NH 03253

ON FURLOUGH

Margaret Helms (September 18)
3612 Brief Rd. E
Monroe, NC 28110

*The missionaries' birthdates follow their names.

 Continued from page 17

disgusted, but too froggish to budge."

"Once upon a time there was a frog — only he wasn't really a frog. He was a prince who looked and felt like a frog. A wicked witch, you see, had cast a spell on him. Only the kiss of a beautiful maiden could save him...but since when do beautiful chicks kiss frogs? So there he sat...an unkissed prince in frog form."

"But miracles happen! One day a beautiful maiden gathered him up and gave him a great, big smack. *Crash! Boom! Zap!* There he was — a handsome prince. And you know the rest of the story...they lived happily ever after."

"God found us as repulsive and insignificant as a frog. Yet He saw the prince or princess in us and kissed us with grace."

"Dear friends, now are we the children of God and what we will be has not been made known. But we know that when He appears, we shall be like Him..." (1 John 3:2).

Programs will not save us. Changes in organizational structure are not a final solution to our inertia. Acceptance into evangelical circles will prove nothing but a temporary fix to our lack of confidence.

Advent Christians, if we conclude that God is finished with us, He is! If we repent of past sin, refuse to yield to a spirit of despair, and allow the visionaries among us to lead us out of exile, the *Lord* of the church has only begun to unfold His plans for us. In light of our high and noble calling, I invite you to join me as we

"Rise up, O men of God!
Have done with lesser things;
Give heart and soul and mind and strength
To serve the King of kings."

"Rise up, O men of God!
The church for you doth wait;
Her strength unequal to the task
Rise up and make her great!"

Wm. P. Merrill ☐

Footnotes

(1) "Into the Next Century: Trends Facing the Church" *Christianity Today Institute*, Carol Stream, IL, January 17, 1986, pp. 3-31.

(2) Clyde Hewitt. *Responsibility and Response* (Charlotte, NC: Venture Books, 1986), p. 16.

(3) Donald Barnhouse. *God's Remedy* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1954), pp. 340, 341.

(4) David Roper. "No Little Places." A publication of Idaho Mountain Ministries.

(5) Ibid.

A graduate of Berkshire Christian College, Clayton Blackstone serves as pastor of the Advent Christian Church of New Hope in Lewiston, Idaho.

 Continued from page 7

cheerful giver."[27] A good offering is "well-pleasing to God.'[28]

If we are truly sincere about our stewardship responsibilities, we will come to the Bible for guidance in giving. There we will find a method that has worked for ages, the practice of giving a tithe. We will also find ample encouragement to give beyond the tithe. We will not find encouragement to give less.

Eight years ago, my wife and I decided to go beyond the tithe in our regular giving by increasing the percentage one-half point each year. By worldly standards, we cannot afford to do this. We have a large family and our income is well below average. But neither of us would consider backing up. We find too much pleasure in giving. And we have learned that we simply cannot out give God. In one way or another He more than makes up for any sacrificial gift we give.

Ultimately, what we give to the Lord is a very personal matter.[29] God deals with each of us in His own special way. But one thing is sure, He wants us to enjoy the fun of big-hearted giving. He knows we will never be truly happy until we learn to give. The truth about tithing is simply this: It works! ☐

Notes

1. Romans 4:1-5; Genesis 15:6
2. James 2:21-24; Genesis 15:6
3. Hebrews 7:5-9; Genesis 14:20
4. Leviticus 27:30-32; Numbers 18:24-28; Deuteronomy 12:6, 17; 14:22-28; 26:12
5. 2 Chronicles 31:5-12; Nehemiah 10:37, 38; 12:44; 13:5, 12; Amos 4:4
6. Malachi 3:8, 9
7. Luke 18:12
8. Matthew 23:23; Luke 11:42
9. Exodus 20:2
10. 1 John 4:19
11. 2 Corinthians 8:9
12. Leviticus 27:30
13. Luke 12:34
14. Mark 4:19; 10:23-25; 1 Timothy 6:9-10, 17-19
15. Malachi 3:10
16. Acts 4:32-35
17. 1 Corinthians 9:14; 1 Timothy 5:18
18. Mark 12:41-44
19. Genesis 15:1b
20. Malachi 3:10
21. Luke 6:38
22. 2 Corinthians 9:6
23. Philippians 4:18, 19
24. Acts 20:35b
25. Philippians 4:18
26. Genesis 22:12
27. 2 Corinthians 9:7
28. Philippians 4:18
29. 2 Corinthians 9:7a

G. Roger Schoenhals is a freelance writer living in Seattle, Washington.

3

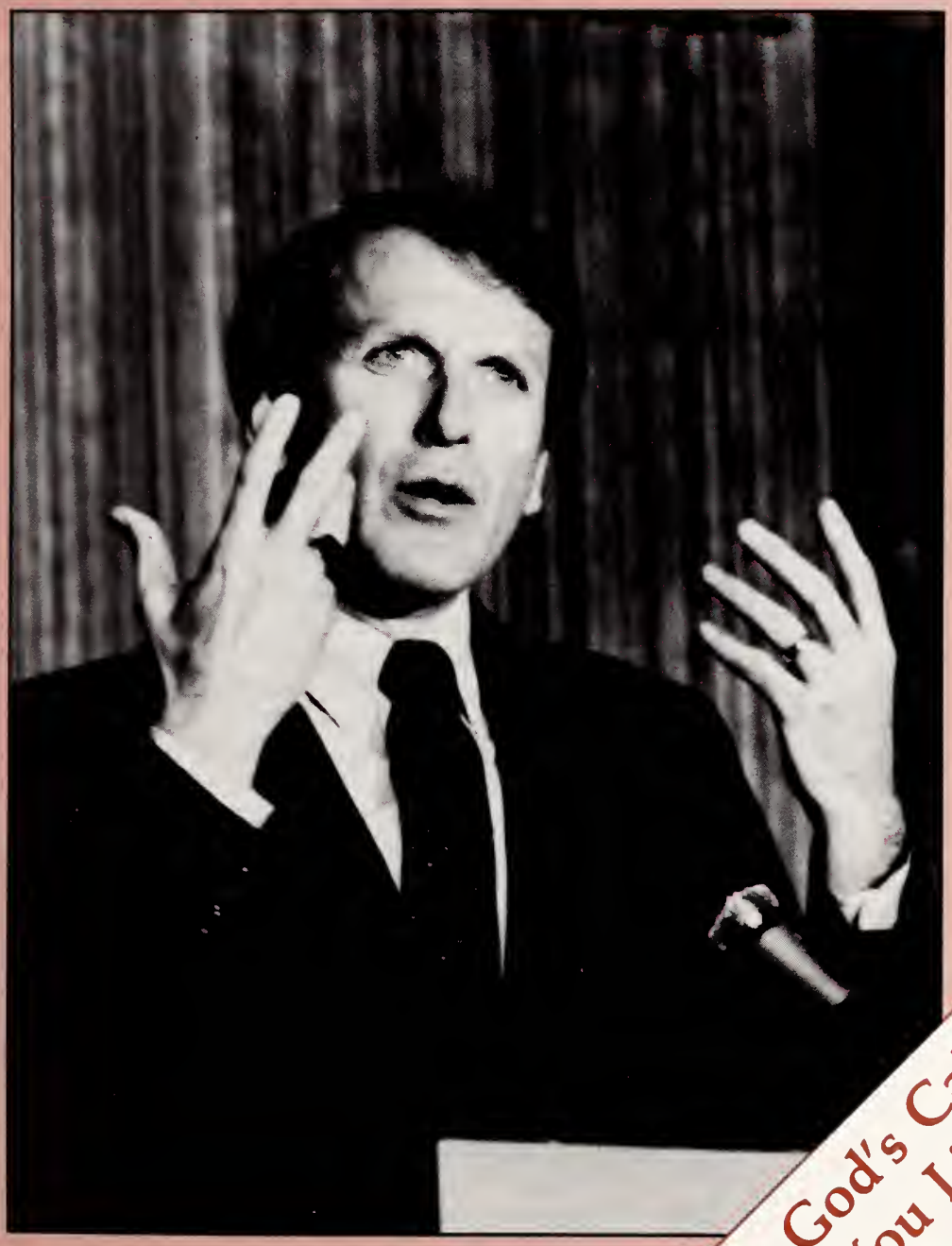
AC04343
University of North Carolina
Serials Dept Davis Library
080 A
Chapel Hill, NC 27514

ADVENT CHRISTIAN
GENERAL CONFERENCE
P.O. Box 23152
14601 Albemarle Road
Charlotte, NC 28212

C286.7
A24

Advent Christian WITNESS

July/August 1987



God's Call: Are You Listening?

pages ten and sixteen

Member
epa
Evangelical Press Association

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
Robert J. Mayer

MISSIONS
Harold Patterson

WHFMS
Caroline M. Michael

GRAPHIC ARTS
Linda Perault

TYPESETTING
Susan Gettis

EFMA MEMBER MISSION

EVANGELICAL COUNCIL FOR FINANCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY ECFA MEMBER
The symbol of trust

Advent Christian Witness (ISSN 0741-4307) is published monthly except for a combined July-August issue, 11 times a year, by the Advent Christian General Conference of America, 14601 Albemarle Road, P.O. Box 23152, Charlotte, NC 28212. Postmaster: Send address changes to *Advent Christian Witness*, P.O. Box 23152, Charlotte, NC.

Policy: As the official publication of the Advent Christian General Conference of America, the *Advent Christian Witness* publishes the teachings of the Advent Christian Church and promotes the task of evangelism both in North America and throughout the world.

Rates in the U.S. and Canada: one year, $11.00. Single Copy, $1.00. Overseas one year, $14.00.

All articles and materials are copyright ©1987 by the Advent Christian General Conference unless otherwise indicated. Permission to reprint available upon request. The views expressed in this magazine are those of the author and may not necessarily reflect those of the editor or the Advent Christian General Conference.

from the editor

Lessons Learned

PTL. Ten years ago, those initials brought to mind words of praise. Today, they remind us that Christian people and organizations are not immune from arrogance, disobedience, and the consequences of sin. A Christian leader has fallen and a ministry stands in disarray. We all know the story but what can we learn from this tragedy?

1. We can learn that the local church is still God's primary tool for worship, discipleship, and evangelism. "Lone-Ranger Christianity," trying to follow Christ without involvement in a church, is foreign to New Testament teaching. Each of us needs the support and accountability only the local congregation can supply. Television ministries must never take the place of local church involvement in our lives.

2. We can learn that the ends never justify the means. No matter what our goals or intentions, methods that compromise Scriptural teaching are sinful and subject to God's judgment. God gives us great freedom to use insights from history, business administration, psychology, and other disciplines to accomplish His purposes. But when insights from those areas clash with biblical principles, Scripture's teaching must take priority.

3. We can learn proper stewardship of God's resources. In this area, it's easy to point our fingers at large organizations and ministries. But how many times have I heard people refer to "our" church or "our" building? The church is never "our" church, it's God's church. Dare we condemn others if we're not committed to evangelism and spiritual growth in our congregations? Are we using the money, buildings, and resources God has entrusted to us to make disciples for Christ and not for our own enjoyment?

4. We can learn to pray for and respect our Christian leaders. For every well publicized Christian celebrity, there are thousands of pastors and church leaders of outstanding character working long hours for low pay. Disrespect for authority is at an all time high among most Americans and you can bet that pastors bear the brunt of this. Before we criticize, let's begin to pray for pastors, missionaries, denominational leaders, and other church leaders who need God's guidance every day.

I hope the initials, PTL, will ten years from now remind us of lessons learned. If we rediscover the importance of the local church, if we recognize God's purposes for our congregations, and if we begin to bathe the ministries of pastors and Christian leaders in prayer, then we'll experience God's power in fresh new ways. □

Volume 35 Number 7

Advent Christian WITNESS

July/August 1987

FEATURES

Disappointment and God's Appointment Lloyd Mattson 4
Broken vacation plans become an opportunity to share Christ's love with a needy person.

Sandi Patti Communicates Angela E. Hunt 6
Most people know Sandi Patti because of her thrilling rendition of the National Anthem at last year's Statue of Liberty celebration. This article shares the depth of her Christian commitment and her call to minister through music.

Rocking Revival: Is God at Work? Scott Linscott 8
Contemporary Christian Music. Where does it fit in God's plan? The youth pastor of New Life Advent Christian Church in Biddeford, Maine shares some answers.

What Keeps Missionaries Going? Ralph E. Dodge 10
Why do missionaries serve Christ in different countries and cultures? Veteran missionary Ralph Dodge points out several answers.

God's Call: Are You Listening? Harold Patterson 16
Is God calling you to pastoral or missionary service? How to recognize His call.

ON THE COVER

Evangelist Leighton Ford speaking at the 1984 National Association of Evangelicals Convention. God calls men and women in a variety of ways to Christian service. Articles by Ralph Dodge and Harold Patterson explore how God calls us and the rewards of a career in Christian service.

photo courtesy of the National Association of Evangelicals

DEPARTMENTS

From the Editor 2

Review 20

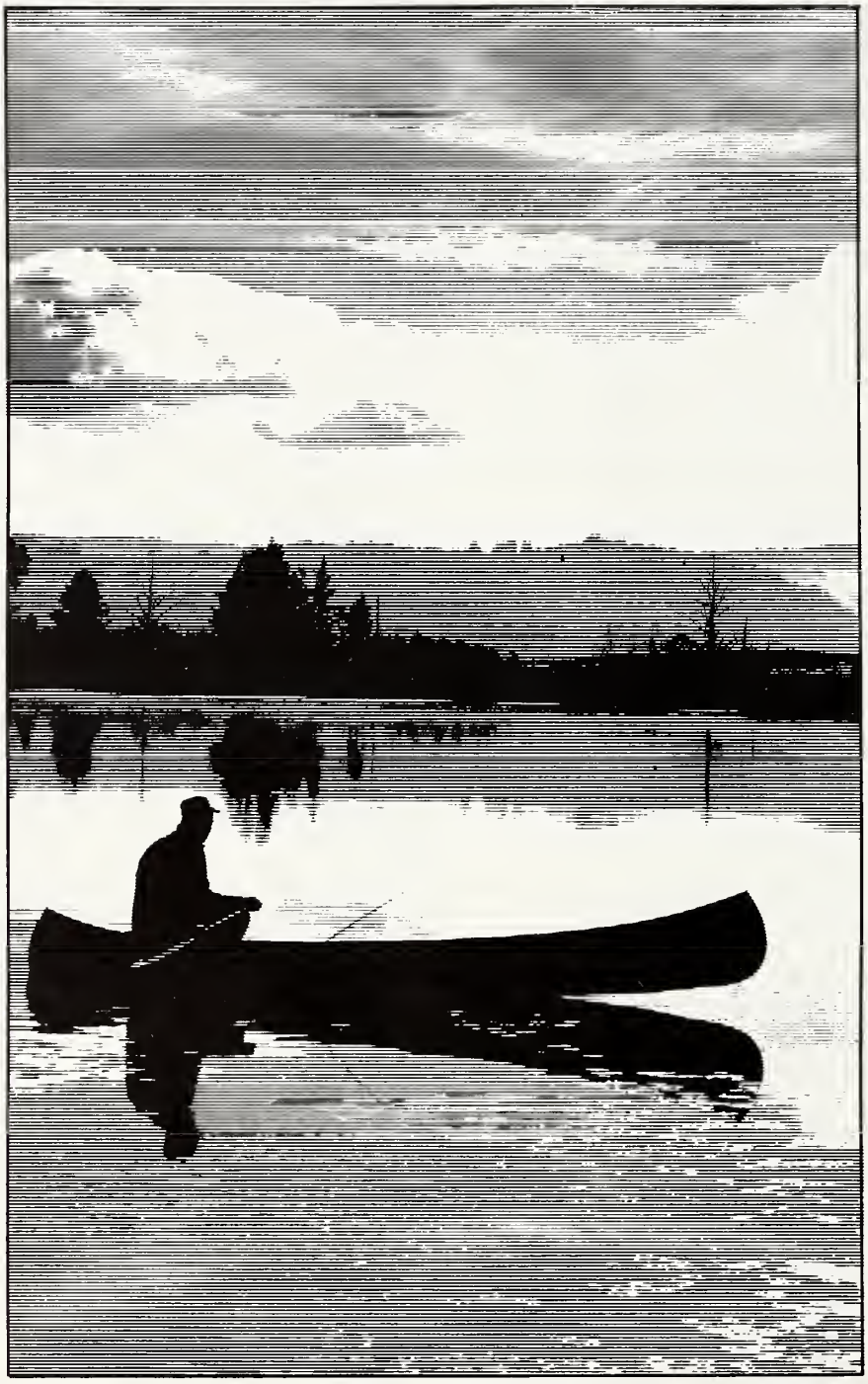
Women's Ministries 22

Prayer Partnership 25

Charles Colson 27

Disappointment and God's Appointment

Lloyd Mattson



My mood was bleak as I tossed fishing and camping gear in the station wagon. First, it was the letter from Jack, then a funeral that shattered my vacation plans.

Jack Vantrease had invited me to spend a week at Bristol Bay during the salmon run. He would fly me down in his plane and put me to work at Graveyard with a set-net crew fishing red salmon, Alaska's gold of the sea.

Like a kid before Christmas, I had counted the days. Fishing was my major recreational interest—any kind of fishing. I had bought special rain gear and loaded my pack days in advance. Then the letter came. The salmon run had fizzled.

Plan two down the drain

Since vacation days had been cleared with the church I served as pastor, I sought alternative plans. A pastor colleague said he knew an outfitter who had a cabin on a remote lake that was noted for its trout and grayling. The cost was within reason and we made a reservation to fly out.

The day before we were to leave, my friend phoned with the bad news that a death had occurred in his congregation, and it would be impossible for him to get away. You don't venture into the bush alone, even if you could afford it. Plan II was down the drain.

Nothing remained but to strike out alone by car, either to the Kenai Peninsula or up Willow way and try the streams for trout or salmon. Neither had the

challenge of a fly-in trip. I chose Cottonwood Creek to the north, and I drove off with little joy.

Near the outskirts of Anchorage, a modest town of 70,000 in those days, I spotted two boys hitchhiking. Long ago I had settled the hitchhike question. The risks were too great to pick up strangers. But who can turn down two kids with towels, obviously headed for a swim? I pulled over.

The boys were sons of servicemen headed for Fort Richardson to enjoy the pool. They asked to be let off where a trail led through the wooded area to a gate.

The trail emerged at a random point on the highway. There was no reason for anyone to be at that particular point, but when I stopped to let the boys get out, an unshaven, roughly-dressed man got in.

"Where are you headed?"

I was annoyed and uneasy. I had not invited him, nor had he asked. He just got in. He tossed a tattered canvas bag in the back and stared silently ahead as we drove.

Finally I asked, "Where are you headed?"

"Fairbanks."

That was it, one word. We drove several miles. I noted that the man was searching the accumulation of maps and papers on the dash with his eyes. A small New Testament was among them.

"You a preacher or something?" he blurted out.

I admitted I was.

"I don't like people who stuff religion down your throat," he said.

I said I didn't care for that either. Something about his manner moved me to ease back on the accelerator a bit. I took a stab at opening conversation. "Where you from?"

"Indiana," he replied.

"Been in Alaska long?"

"Couple months. No jobs in Anchorage. I'll try Fairbanks."

Little by little his story emerged; short, sometimes profane sentences. A young wife and baby left behind; a Christian mother-in-law; a praying church. He had pretended an interest in the gospel to gain his wife, then turned back to his self-centered ways. I slowed a bit more.

I said very little, probing now and then with a question affirming when I could. A sense of excitement and wonder grew within me as this rough, tough man began to soften. He was a long, long way from home.

Did his wife know where he was? Probably she was worried. How old was the youngster? I mentioned how much I enjoyed our five children, what great times me and my wife had. Mostly I just listened. I suggested that his wife and her family and friends talked about the gospel because they really cared for him.

"Well, what about it?"

We crossed the long bridge and headed toward Palmer, where my route would carry me off the main road. The man had lapsed into silence, staring up the road that led out of Alaska toward home.

As we reached the edge of Palmer, I turned onto a two-rut road that led through the brush toward the mountains. The man seemed reluctant to leave. "Well, what about it?" I said. "You know what you should do."

Tears filled the man's eyes as he looked through the dusty windshield toward the mountains. No evangelism formula, no words at all from me. The man talked with God, "Lord, I don't know much about praying, but I sure need you."

I added a prayer then turned to several verses in my New Testament, pointing out God's gift of life in Christ Jesus. I folded down the pages so he could find them again and gave the New Testament to the man. There was joy in his voice when he thanked me. Then we parted.

That was the best fishing trip I ever took. I think I caught a few salmon. I enjoyed three days in the wilderness I love. Above all I was enriched beyond measure by the knowledge that my days were in God's hands.

Bristol Bay would come another time, and so would many fish from remote waters. My appointment that day was to answer the prayers of a young wife and mother in Indiana. □

Lloyd Mattson, recently retired after 40 years of Christian service, lives in a country home in Northern Minnesota called Whiteface Woods. He and his wife Elsie share in a varied ministry of speaking, writing and publishing, particularly in the interest of Christian camping. Lloyd has written a dozen camping books and many articles for evangelical publishers.

Sandi Patti Communicates

Courtesy, National Association of Evangelicals. Photo by Ron Howard.

Angela E. Hunt

People often say that Sandi Patti has the power to "bring fans to their feet and believers to their knees," but she is easily misunderstood. Her success has not evolved from a brilliant voice, though her three-octave soprano can be powerful in one breath and gently wooing in the next. Her fame has not risen from an overwhelming personality, though she charms audiences with a professional repertiore worthy of the best performers. Sandi is a cut above because she does it all, but versatility alone does not account for her rise to prominence.

Sandi's appeal springs from her simple ability to translate her fulfilled and happy life in Christ into songs that communicate.

Sandi is the first to admit that her testimony "is probably not the most interesting one you have heard. I grew up in a Christian home. My father was a music minister at our local church, and my parents were always calling and showing me that Jesus loves me. They were careful to point out that becoming a Christian was a decision I alone could make. I did on my eighth birthday. Jesus was the best birthday present I have ever received."

A musical home

Sandi and her two younger brothers enjoyed their musical home. Her mother taught Sandi piano and music, and the family often traveled to other churches for concerts. Sandi now readily admits that her parents were the most influential people in her life: "I would watch them and see how they put into practice the things they said they believed. Their actions always supported what they said."

Sandi delivered her first solo before she was 3. She continued singing through her teenage years and entered college as a music education major. Her first job was as a teacher's assistant in a junior high school. Later she found herself earning money for college as a backup singer—recording jingles for Juicy Fruit gum, fast-food restaurants, and the Ohio State Fair.

At Anderson College she met and fell in love with John Helvering. John encouraged her to record a custom album—*For My Friends*. One week before their wedding, a recording executive heard the album, called Sandi, and her recording/concert career took off.

"Everything started to mushroom from that point on," Sandi told the *Saturday Evening Post*. "We hadn't planned on a music career, but it felt right."

Sandi recorded her first commercial album in 1979. Since then she has earned the Dove Award for Female Vocalist of the Year every year since 1982; the Dove Award for Gospel Artist of the Year for 1982, 1984, and 1985; and has been nominated for the Grammy Award for Best Gospel Performances for three years.

Her albums have won the Dove Award Inspirational Album of the Year three times, and she has recorded three songs designated as the Dove Award's Song of the Year.

"I believe in what the songs say"

After the 1985 Dove Awards ceremony, during which she received four prestigious awards, Sandi said, "I would be singing gospel music whether there were awards or not, because I believe in what the songs say and in the way of life I've chosen: to live according to the Lord and what He's done for me. But it always means a lot to me to receive votes of confidence like the Dove Awards. Through them, people who are involved in the same industry are saying to me, "We believe in what you are doing, and we are supporting you and praying for you.' "

When she is not in a concert hall or the recording studio, fulfilling her role as "the voice" or as the gospel singer of the year, Sandi is a wife and mother. John Helvering is more than Sandi's husband. He is her business partner, handling everything from bookings to sound equipment. "John does so many things," Sandi told a writer from *Contemporary Christian Music*. "He's a very unique man. Honestly, there has never been a time when there was a difficulty with my being in the forefront and John's being in the background. John feels he is doing what God has given him to do. Although people may not see him very much, John is a part of everything I do and everything I am. He's in control of everything."

John and Sandi Helvering became parents on May 22, 1984. Sandi cried at Anna's first birthday party. "I was just thinking about the last year—I can't believe she's a year old."

Help with the dishes

John and Sandi, their parents, and all of their brothers and sisters live in Anderson, Indiana. Sandi feels her family is the stabilizing influence that keeps her in touch with reality. "When I get home from a concert," she says, "the first thing Mom asks is how my concert went. Then she tells me to get in the kitchen and help with the dishes."

Since Anna's birth, Sandi has realized that her life will be settling down a bit. While Anna is young, she will travel with her mother and father, but when she reaches school age Sandi plans to cut traveling to summers and weekends. "It's not fair for her to grow up in an unrealistic environment."

Living out of a suitcase promotes an appreciation for the comforts of home, but Sandi does not overemphasize her lovely home. "If the house were on fire, I'd grab my husband and my daughter," she explained. "There's nothing else that can't be replaced."

Sandi works hard at developing a "normal" life, and she appreciates the friends who offer help and encouragement every day. When asked who she would want in the hospital bed next to her if she were recuperating from an illness, Sandi laughed and thought for a moment. She did not name a famous singer or renowned personality. She mentioned a valued friend: "I'd want my Bible study leader, Bev Graddy. I would very much enjoy spending my days with her. She always has something encouraging to say because she really walks with the Lord. She helps me keep my eyes on the eternal things."

Sandi is also concerned about current world needs. She and nine other artists recently recorded "We'll Stand Together," an album for World Vision, available for a donation of $20. The money will provide food, water, and medicine for a family in Africa for over a month. "I was floored when I learned what $20 could do," said Sandi. She has also agreed to serve as a television spokesman for World Vision.

Sandi joined with CAUSE (Christian Artists United to Save the Earth) to cut a song for Compassion International. The proceeds will also provide relief for famine victims in Africa.

"Thoughout my entire life I have tried to allow the Lord to guide and direct my decisions and actions. I never planned to become a gospel singer, but God opened the doors. I am simply trying to be faithful to His calling."

What will the future hold for Sandi Patti? "I believe that as long as I continue in His Word and live the kind of life He wants me to live daily, I will accomplish what is really important. My family and my career are second to my relationship with my heavenly Father." □

Angela E. Hunt is a freelance writer living in Lynchburg, Virginia. She has written for several Christian magazines.

Rocking Revival: Is God at Work?

Scott Linscott

The smoke billows up from the back of the stage. Bright colored lights flash on and off and several spotlights scan the crowd of thousands of fans screaming with anticipation. Finally the moment waited for arrives as people appear on stage. Electric guitars scream, drums pound endlessly, and thousand of teens are exposed to the message of Jesus in one night packed full of high-intensity rock music.

Many cringe at the thought and condemn the recent rocking revival as "of the world" and "unworthy before the Lord." Meanwhile teenagers come to Christ.

The music is energetic, powerful, and carries a strong message:

"On the edge
That's where we go to be
Nothing less
And no more in-betweens
On the edge
No room for compromise
'Til they see
Jesus living in my life."
—Steve Camp, *On The Edge*

The beat is strong, the guitars loud, and the lyrics powerful. The bottom line is that young people are being reached for Christ through their musical tastes.

Should teens change their taste?

Some in our churches would have it that our Christian teens change their musical tastes from energetic music to traditional hymns, organ music, and southern gospel as a prerequisite to their Christianity. It's nearly impossible and totally unnecessary.

Throughout history the church has met each musical revolution with a great deal of resistance. The traditional hymns of today were the radical new hymns of yesterday.

I've even heard some people claim that Satan is behind the recent movement in Christian rock music. If so, Satan is leading thousands of young people to decisions for Christ! A house divided against itself cannot stand. If Satan is behind this rocking revival he has conceded to defeat. That's unlikely.

One of the most controversial new Christian bands is Stryper, a heavy metal band whose sound is comparable to such secular bands as Motley Crue and W.A.S.P. The difference is in the lyrics. While Motley Crue and W.A.S.P. sing of sex, hell, and hopelessness; Stryper sings of the love of Jesus.

In an interview in the winter '86 issue of *Newsound,* Robert Sweet, Stryper's drummer and spokesman, responded to those who have criticized the band for its involvement in heavy metal music.

Sweet said, "The place the light shines the brightest is in the darkest corner and when you go to the darker places, the light shines brighter. And that's why I still don't understand why some Christians stay only in lit places. We're to be the light of the world, and if all the lights stay in one building, what is accomplished?"

Stryper is just one of many bands bringing the message of Jesus to places it has never been before.

The biggest name in contemporary Christian music is Amy Grant. Amy made the secular music charts a few times in 1985 with her biggest hit being "Find a Way." Because Amy was getting airtime on secular radio stations across the country many Christians instantly condemned her and said she had sold out. They claimed she had compromised her beliefs and watered down the content of her music just to sell records. Unfortunately most of these same Christians failed to even give Amy a fair chance by listening to her new music. Does this sound watered down to you?

If our God His Son not sparing
Came to rescue you
Is there any circumstance
That He can't see you through?
—Amy Grant,
(Love Will) Find A Way"

That was the message heard by millions on radio stations all across the country. True, it didn't provide listeners with "the four spiritual laws" but it did tell of God's unconditional love. Grant, even though she is selling albums in the secular market, challenges her listeners with a Christian perspective. Will she fall to all the temptations of fame and fortune that are bombarding her now? Let's pray that she doesn't rather than just give her up for lost and say, "I told you so."

A positive influence

Some have even gone so far as condemning the whole of contemporary Christian music saying that the beat is Satanic. Again the argument comes up, why are so many teens coming to Christ through it? Like it or not, commitments are being made to Christ every day through this medium and thousands who might not hear it otherwise are hearing the Gospel.

Our children are bombarded every day with negative, secular rock music. They are exposed to it on television, in cars, at school and at the movies. There appears to be nothing we can do, short of locking them up in caves, to prevent them from being influenced by today's music.

If we as churches and parents forbid them to listen to Christian music, which we can do quite easily since it isn't played on most radio stations, we've eliminated a positive musical influence on their lives. On the other hand, if we as churches and parents encouraged our young people to listen to Christian contemporary music and helped provide it, we could be sure they were at least hearing the message of Christ throught a medium they enjoy.

Christian music is now available for listeners of all musical tastes. Unfortunately it is often too expensive for our young people and is not as readily available as secular rock.

For this very reason music lending libraries are catching on in churches across the country. Sparrow Records and Word Records offer special low prices to youth leaders who wish to organize music libraries in their churches. These libraries let people borrow recordings from a wide selection of contemporary Christian artists and provide the opportunity to review albums before purchasing them. If they like the album they can go out and buy a copy, if not they can try another.

Contemporary Christian music is here to stay. Perhaps for the first time in history the people of the church will be quick to recognize that the Lord is doing a new thing through music and will praise Him and support it. Perhaps not. □

Scott Linscott is the pastor of Youth Ministries at the New Life Fellowship Advent Christian Church in Biddeford, Maine.

What Keeps Missionaries Going?

Ralph E. Dodge

What keeps missionaries going? That they are the poorest paid of any professionals is well known. Yet they gladly leave the land of their birth for repeated terms of service in some distant area of the world. What is there in missionary work that gives them such satisfaction and makes them such a joyous group of people? What can there be that compensates for the lack of material rewards?

As one who served in Africa for over thirty-five years let me answer these often asked questions. They perplex many sincere Christians. What are the non-material spiritual benefits enjoyed by those who respond to Christ's call and venture forth on faith?

Spiritual joy

First, there is the inner spiritual joy which comes from responding to Christ's commission to "go into all the world and *make disciples* among all nations." The importance of this commission is seen from the fact that it was the final instructions He gave His disciples before ascending into heaven. [Matthew 28:19, Mark 16:15, Acts 1:8].

As a parent, just before leaving home, might tell a child not to forget something important, so Jesus reminded His followers of all generations of their responsibility. Those who respond to that commission know the full joy which comes from total commitment in obedience to God's will.

Associated with that is the deep spiritual satisfaction which comes from seeing people won to Christ. Having even a small part in winning disciples and in establishing the Christian church brings an indescribable spiritual reward.

Fellowship with a common purpose

On a more human plane is the joy of fellowship with fellow missionaries. No association in the world is closer than that existing between missionaries. It is the most intense between those of a given denomination but it goes far beyond that. The ecumenical movement which gave rise to the World Council of Churches, the National Councils, and the National Association of Evangelicals had its origin in the missionary movement.

The gulf which separates people of different denominations in their homeland largely disappears on the mission field. Two Americans meeting in Tokyo, or in any remote area of the world, stress their commonality rather

than their differences. Missionary fellowship across denominational lines is usually very warm and meaningful.

There also develops a close fellowship between missionaries and the people of any given area. Harmoniously working together with people of any culture grows into a feeling of mutual interest and concern. After working with a given group of people in Africa for thirty-five years, I have a greater feeling of oneness with them than with many fellow Americans. Years of close association build a supporting community across denominational, racial, and cultural lines.

Challenging work

A third satisfaction from being a missionary is the constant challenge which missionary work offers. There is the necessity of learning a new language. Travel in unknown areas is a challenge. The need to make a limited budget stretch around the necessities of life is a challenge. Trying to understand the reactions of people of a different culture is demanding. To adjust to an entirely different diet requires patience and sometimes courage.

To trust the Lord for health care when modern medical facilities are lacking is a test of faith. Even though the missionaries may often fail, there is deep satisfaction arising from accepting a challenge and going forth on faith. From beginning to end, missionary work is a challenge.

Ministry with people

A fourth inner personal gratification comes from observing the development of people ministered unto. It is the satisfaction which comes from professional success; be it the doctor whose patient recovers or the pastor whose new member takes a position of responsible leadership in the church. It is similar to the gratification of any teacher who watches a serious student increase in understanding and develop leadership ability.

Perhaps the satisfaction of the missionary is greater than that of most other professionals because of the cultural gap bridged when the child of illiterate peasants becomes a college professor, a pastor, a physician, or a national political leader. Knowing that the missionary has had a part in bringing light into a darkened community is spiritually undergirding and highly rewarding. A high recompense comes from observing the change in the lifestyle of individuals and from watching a whole community, tribe, or nation upgraded because of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

On a very human level, the unsolicited expressions of gratitude and love from those who have been influenced come as moving emotional rewards. A few years ago when there was a death in my family the many expressions of condolences and understanding were all appreciated. But the one that moved me most was the call from the Zimbabwe High Commissioner (Ambassador) in London, England. He had just heard of my loss and wished to comfort a friend who had previously ministered to him and had helped him get his university education.

Recently my wife and I had the privilege of entertaining Dr. & Mrs. William Humbane of

Continued on next page

Mozambique in our home. I had first met William when he was in the eighth grade. He had worked with me as my secretary and driver in Africa for ten years before he received a scholarship to study in the United States. After many years of study he was granted a Ph.D. degree in education. Returning home, he soon rose to head the language department in the only university in his native land. On a trip in the interest of their church and to visit their children in Texas, the Humbanes had set aside nearly a week to be with us. It was a gratifying reunion as between parents and children.

Once or twice a year we get a telephone call from Stockholm, Sweden, on what must be a "Watts" line. For a half hour or so Dr. Jopelle Ndzimba tells us about his family of three children and usually refers to the Bible I gave him when he was expelled from our mission school. He had kept it and after wandering around for several years he had married and settled down to study and work in a Stockholm hospital. He always expressed gratitude for what the Bible and our friendship have meant to him.

The highest human honor that ever came to me was being invited to a dinner which the President of Angola, the late Dr. A. Agostinho Neto, gave for me in 1976. He wanted me to meet the members of his cabinet in the quiet atmosphere of his home. Several of them I had known as boys, when they, like Dr. Neto, had been in our mission in Luanda.

The above examples may be unusual but the recognition and appreciation given to missionaries, by boys and girls, men and women, whom they have helped, is common. It is a pearl without price always to be carried and brought forth to give psychological light on a dark and dismal day.

Missionaries will tell of other non-material rewards like travel benefits or the association during furloughs with many gracious church related people. It is these intangible bonuses that take God's faithful servants on their many trips to little known parts of the world to proclaim the words of life.

Undoubtedly, the greatest recompense of all is the joy of seeing God's hand at work redeeming the unsaved and establishing them in the Christian faith. Yes, there are unseen benefits derived from being a missionary but the greatest prize of all awaits the faithful. One day they will be among those who hear the Master proclaim, "enter thou into the joy of thy Lord" [Matthew 25:21]. □

A veteran United Methodist missionary with over 35 years of service, Rev. Ralph Dodge lives at the Advent Christian Village in Dowling Park, Florida.

Three New Churches

Beryl Joy Hollis

The Injambakkam and Navaloor Advent Christian churches hastened to get their buildings finished before Christmas 1986, so that the congregations could meet in them for their Christmas services. The Pattabiram congregation could not complete their building in December, so they dedicated their new church exactly one month after Christmas.

The *Injambakkam* congregation had been meeting in the mud-walled, thatched school building for years — an unsatisfactory situation in today's circumstances. I remember Injambakkam as being the first village I went to after coming to India. In those days there was no good road there, and four-wheel drive was essential. But now there is a popular holiday resort nearby, and middle class homes and factories are springing up in the area.

Speakers recalled how the piece of land was bought for a song in the old days, and how Barbara White had come there to Injambakkam in the Mobile Dispensary with a Bible woman. They would dispense medicine in the morning, eat under a tree at noon, and visit in homes in the afternoon. But the church remained desperately poor. Finally the decision was made to sell a portion of the land, and build the church.

The school of Injambakkam started in 1912, as a result of the villagers' request. They even gave a hut in which the school could meet. Later, many children from this village studied in the higher grades in Velacheri, living in the Velacheri hostel. Nevertheless, the spiritual response has never been good. It is therefore with great joy that we see this advancement for the kingdom in Injambakkam.

Like Injambakkam, the work in Navaloor began with day and night schools; in the case of Navaloor, the school began in 1917 in a place called Thalambur. This village is well in from the main road, so when a church was erected (a mud and thatch hut), it was in Navaloor, on the main road. It took 21 years from the founding of the school for the fruit of this work to be plucked — the first baptism took place in 1938.

The new building is a great improvement on the dilapidated hut in which the congregation was meeting. With sturdy brick walls and a thick thatch, it has become a worthy village church. Some Capital Funds Drive monies went into this church.

Pattabiram. The first mention of work in this area was in the 1944 annual report from India — under the name Avadi, at that time. The church has moved from one area to another, from hut, to house, to another hut, and now finally to a splendid church building with a flat roof which can also be used for meetings. The Mission has never had a school in this area. The young men of the church are enthusiastic and evangelistic and the ability to build such a fine building is largely due to the physical labour which they put into it. Apart from the funds which the church itself raised, there was some help from the Capital Funds Drive, and from the Advent Christian Conference funds.

May these three churches grow in numbers and in spiritual graces. □

Iglesia Cristiana Nueva Vida

Carlos Quintero

New Life Christian Church is the new name of the Marengo Avenue Advent Christian Church, Hispanic congregation. It used to be called a "community church," but really, that name failed to communicate what in effect was and is taking place within, and among its members.

Iglesia Cristiana Nueva Vida is located in the heart of a Hispanic community in Pasadena, California. It came into existence as a direct result of the vision of a few men and women at the First Advent Christian Church of Pasadena; and the prayerful and financial support of its members.

Iglesia Nueva Vida is a vitally growing congregation in the midst of a hurting and highly transient community. Its main purpose is to "grow wholistically in its context." That means that this young congregation seeks to be established in its relationship to the Lord Jesus Christ. Growing in Him means to us serious discipleship whereby obedience to His word is evident in all of us. It also means to develop a deep sense of fellowship with Him. Do all members succeed? Of course not, but they are experiencing, on a moment-to-moment basis, the blessings of God and His supernatural intervention in daily situations.

Iglesia Cristiana Nueva Vida is composed of people from virtually every country of Latin America. Many are first generation Hispanics who have recently come to Los Angeles, while others have experienced a considerable degree of acculturation into the Anglo culture. It is interesting to try to communicate with such a diverse group. I must be careful in the use of certain words which might have a different meaning in another country.

Preparing the Chapel for Pastor Carlos Quintero's ordination service.

Our coming together is a real testimony of the transcendence of Christ, and the love He places within His people's hearts. Together we are a composite of: Mexico, Guatamala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Panama, Ecuador, Peru, El Salvador, Columbia, and Argentia.

Christ brings us together

You may ask: "What brings them together?" The only direct answer I can offer you is — the reality of God's revelation — Jesus Christ in our lives, and also, willingness to obey Him. We believe that the program God has for us is people, and not activities. This church is people-oriented! They are friendly and care for one another. One of the things that takes place throughout the week is the mutual calling and/or visiting of one another, and those who are yet to know the Lord Jesus.

Visitation is a spontaneous affair among the members. I recall after a time together, four people went with me to visit some of the families. We went without making any pre-arranged phone calls. We spent a meaningful time of fellowship with them, and were able to witness to a friend of that family who happened to be visiting at the time. It

all took place in a natural and spontaneous way.

Our worship time is very lively with guitar and sometimes the piano. It is meaningful for us to sing for 20-30 minutes at the opening of our worship, before moving on to any other facet of the service. Many people share what God is doing in their lives, and the things that God is pointing out to them through the study of Scripture and in devotional time. Verses of scripture flow freely as they share their experiences with God.

Iglesia Cristiana Nueva Vida's second anniversary dinner

The discipline of prayer

Prayer is a vital discipline in the life of this congregation. Our regular prayer meetings are very Spirit charged. We meet every Saturday morning to intercede for one another, for the church in general (both Anglo and Hispanic), and also to stand against the power of Satan. During some of these meetings God has revealed His mighty healing and delivering power in the lives of a number of those in attendance, or in the congregation. Just recently, one of our congregants who suffered with Parkinson's disease, was healed. She had reached a stage in her illness that kept her from functioning without assistance of a family member. God touched her miraculously. Next Sunday she came to church, and walked up front to give God the glory. And to prove that God had healed her, she ran back to her seat. Praise the Lord!

This prayer group has been functioning for 14 months. Since its beginnings, we can attest to the clear direction and revelation of God in our midst. It was through prayer that God answered the petitions of those who prayed, "God bring the right people into our midst...," we saw the Lord bring to us David Crook, who now pastors the Anglo congregation. Through prayer we have stood together to fight against the demonic oppression that was often felt in our premises. Through prayer we are seeing people being won to Christ — not because of arguments or logic, but in demonstration of the power of God. Through prayer, God is giving to us a new sense of direction for ministry and opening new avenues for ministry, both in the Anglo and Hispanic congregations.

In terms of special activities, we celebrated together my ordination in April 1986. In preparation, the Hispanic church got together and repainted the chapel and cleaned the downstairs. One of our parishioners got married in May, and everyone in the church pitched in to make the reception run smoothly. Also, we gathered together November 23, to celebrate our second anniversary of being chartered. Over 85 people participated in that event, mostly Hispanics.

La Iglesia Cristiana Nueva Vida has a long way to go to reach its full potential and maturity. Yet, we feel confident that with the presence of the Lord Jesus, it matters not how long the way is, so long as we vitally experience Him in every aspect of our lives, day by day till He comes! □

A graduate of Fuller Theological Seminary, Pastor Carlos Quintero serves Iglesia Cristiana Nueva Vida in Pasadena, California.

GOD'S CALL: ARE YOU LISTENING?

Photo courtesy of Intervarsity Christian Fellowship.

Harold Patterson

The "Call of God" is an awesome and mysterious activity. To announce publicly that you have been "called" to full-time Christian service for some is a frightening and difficult task. Is it proudful or even presumptuous to claim that you have been "called by God" to Christian work?

The "call of God" is an important part in committing to full-time Christian service. Over seventy-five percent of all "full time" Christian workers testify to a time or times where God called them "to His work." This is important to know when one faces trials of serving the Lord.

A sudden, dramatic event?

In the minds of many, a "call of God" is a sudden, dramatic, supernatural happening. It comes unexpected and grips the recipient in its aura. Many young people think they need to hear the voice of God saying, "I want you to be a missionary and go to Nigeria for me" for example.

While this does happen, generally the call to full-time service is a series of events in a person's life. It's much like receiving a series of telephone calls or receiving initial instructions for a job and then when that is completed, further instructions follow. Consider the example of the Apostle Paul, who on the road to Damascus saw and heard Jesus Christ and the Lord in response to his question, "Lord, what will thou have me do?" said unto him, "Arrive and go into the city and it shall be told thee what thou must do."

Paul, the greatest missionary of all time, next to Jesus Christ, had a series of missionary calls. His initial "call" came on the road to Damascus (Acts 9:4-6). He was "called" again into service when Barnabus went and got him from Tarsus (Acts 11:24-26). He and Barnabus were called by the Holy Spirit in church (Acts 13:2) and then, of course, the famous Macedonian call (Acts 16:9-10). God's plan for using Paul to evangelize the Gentiles came in progressive revelation.

Different calls of God

There are "calls" to full-time service that come ultimately from the Lord, but in different ways. Let's consider a few of these. There is *the call of Scripture,* particularly the Great Commission in Matthew 28:19-20. Whenever we read this or other Great Commission Scriptures, we should be "called."

There is *the call of a reborn spirit.* When a person accepts Jesus Christ as Saviour and realizes they have been forgiven of their sins, they naturally, or should I say supernaturally, follow a great desire to share this with others who need Christ. Paul would say in Romans 1:14, "I am debtor both to the Greeks, and to the Barbarians; both to the wise, and to the

unwise." He was in debt, in so much as he had an answer to sin condition of all men. Much like a person who has been cured by a treatment of a seemingly incurable disease, is anxious to share it with others that he or she finds with the same condition.

There is *the call of lost souls* as illustrated in Paul's call in the vision of the man of Macedonia. Millions today wait to hear the gospel of Jesus Christ for the first time. When one missionary shared the gospel in a tribe that had never heard of Jesus before, an elder in that village stood and said, "What terrible thing have we done, that you have waited so long in bringing us this good news?"

The call of God's servants, just as Barnabus went seeking Saul to labor with him, so pastors and missionaries share an invitation to come and help in the preaching of the gospel. When we consider that seventy-five percent of the Advent Christian missionaries will retire in ten years, how important it is that we recruit! Our missionaries are burdened and seeking others to take their place on the fields of harvest. How many persons in full-time service today are there because of the invitation and encouragement of pastors and missionaries. It is right to approach a promising or gifted person that you sense God is speaking to and share with them that God has impressed you to speak to them about full-time Christian service.

There is *the call of the Spirit.* There is an experience in a worship service, Mission Conference, Campmeeting, Youth Camp, when it seems so clear that God is speaking to you about full-time Christian commitment. In Acts 13:2, the Spirit spoke to the church that Paul and Barnabus should be sent out. Is God speaking to you and your church about full-time service? It is more likely that you will hear the Lord speaking in a service such as that rather than on the busy highways of life.

In the call of service, there is that inner feeling that you must serve the Lord and that there are things that God has for you to do. There may come the realization that from youth or from childhood the Lord has been preparing you for a particular field of Christian work. The burden may come heavy, Paul would say, "Woe is me, if I preach not the gospel." It may be that there is a still small voice calling in your heart to what God wants you to do.

There is *the call of the Saviour* that you may hear in your devotions, in a service, or riding along the road saying, "Come, follow me." Peter Marshall called it, "The tap on the shoulder." Like a notice from the government, drafting you into the Lord's service, a summons from the great Commander-in-chief of the army of the Lord that he wants you to serve Him. You may be able to run for awhile, but the voice of the Lord will continue to follow you, calling, wooing, seeking you into His service.

Are you listening?

Why do not more people hear the call of God? Many times it's because they are not listening. I heard a radio evangelist say once, "If God called you on the telephone, could you hear it ring?" Many times we are so busy, caught up in our activities, our busy schedule, our pleasures, that we cannot hear the voice of God calling. Or maybe we do not want to hear. I remember as I resisted the call of God to full-time service, that when I was alone I liked to turn a radio up loud so that I could concentrate on that and it would help to drown out the voice of God speaking to me. Perhaps this is your circumstance today?

What really is a missionary call? The late Rev. Theodore Epps, long-time speaker on "Back to the Bible," gave the best definition of a missionary call I have ever heard. I remember it still. It involved four points: (1) To see a need and have a burden for it. (2) To know that you can meet that need or be trained to meet it. (3) To have the opportunity to meet that need. (4) Lastly, know assuredly that the Lord wants you to meet that need. When those line up, you have a call!

Is God calling you today? Can you hear His voice? Even as you read this article, can you say as the hymn writer has said, "I can hear my Saviour calling, I can hear my Saviour calling, I can hear my Saviour calling. Take your cross and follow me." Why fight it any longer? Yield to Him today and know the joy of full surrender to God's will!

How should one respond to a missionary call? First of all, you need to answer the Lord in prayer and commitment. Praying as Paul did, "Lord, what will you have me do?" Next, talk to your pastor or spiritual leader and tell him or her of your decision and ask them to pray with you. Contact the Department of World Missions or the Department of Church Expansion at the Advent Christian Headquarters for help and guidance in future service. Make a public commitment of your decision. Be obedient to the leadings of the Lord. The call of God can be thrilling in its wonder, its joy and its blessing. It can be yours if you are willing and obedient! □

Harold Patterson is Director of World Missions for the Advent Christian General Conference.

The Springtime of Advent Christian Missions?

Freeman Barton

The last couple of decades of the twentieth century hold forth more promise for the dynamic spread of the Christian faith around the globe than any other period of time since Jesus turned the water into wine.

So writes C. Peter Wagner at the beginning of *On the Crest of the Wave: Becoming a World Christian.* Might it not be the *springtime* of Advent Christian missions?

Adventism at its best has had a consuming passion for proclaiming salvation. Our earliest missionaries were tentmakers. They earned their livings by a variety of means during the week. Then they filled their pockets with tracts, took along a prophetic chart, and jumped on the newly available train to go some distance away for the weekend. Finding a convenient (or not so convenient) spot, they gathered an audience and preached. The denomination grew. For a decade in the 1870s and '80s it was the fastest growing denomination in the country.

We have always been interested in reaching across the boundaries of culture and race to minister God's grace. Our earliest truly missionary (i.e., cross-cultural) work was carried out among freedmen right after the Civil War. Harriet Hastings was an exemplar of devotion in her months of ministry in the South, separated from husband and family who supported her.

We began reaching outside North America in 1881 with the beginning of the work in India. In terms of world missions, we reached a peak in 1960 with 34 missionaries overseas. In numbers, although by no means in quality of personnel, we have been declining gradually ever since. Our overseas force (including active missionaries on furlough) has now shrunk to 14, including three on extensive short terms.

Compare what has been happening in the mission world in general. In the '80s the North American Protestant overseas force increased from 55,000 to 68,000. Career missionaries increased from 38,000 to 41,000 short termers from 17,000 to 27,000. More broadly and more importantly the evangelical church has been growing with amazing speed in Latin America, parts of Asia, and especially Africa. The churches in these countries are themselves forming mission boards and sending personnel across cultural boundaries.

Why the decline?

How do we account for the contrast—evangelical mission efforts flourishing, AC effects languishing? The answer is complex, and it would be a disservice to our mission efforts and the denomination to oversimplify. We need to do more research concerning the dynamics of church growth vis a vis the Advent Christian denomination.

Some factors appear to be particularly significant. (1) The denomination itself is languishing somewhat. (2) For a quarter decade we tinkered with the denominational machinery, perhaps to the detriment of weightier matters. (3) We certainly tried to put a cap on mission spending as compared to other programs at the national

level. (4) The number of AC young people entering Christian service has declined. A number of Berkshire Christian students in the past decade have been greatly interested in missions, but few of them have been Advent Christian. (5) Now Berkshire Christian itself may be a memory.

How do we respond to our poor showing? Rationalization? Remnant theology? Despair? Retreat? Surrender? By no means!

We have lost some battles. The recent history of Berkshire Christian is one of them. Our losses of churches and members are others. Our national programs suffer for lack of funds. But we have reversed the net loss of churches. We are holding our own, at least, in membership, and should begin to grow. We have many capable people of all ages who will respond positively to a challenge.

Remember Ahab and Ben-Hadad? The latter made harsh demands, and Ahab spinelessly conceded to them. Ben-Hadad upped the ante. Ahab hesitated. Then an anonymous prophet spoke for the Lord: "Do you see this vast army? I will give it into your hand today, and then you will know that I am the Lord." Even under a godless king, the Lord gave the Israelites a great victory. Ben-Hadad's response? The God of the Israelites is limited to the hills. Entice them down to the plains, and the victory is ours. In the spring Yahweh proved he was God of the plains also (1 Kings 20).

Giving in too easily?

Permit me a bit of sermonic spiritualizing. We have sometimes given in too easily to the forces of evil—even in the hills. Perhaps these concessions, like those to Ben-Hadad, have made the forces of Satan overconfident. While they are celebrating in their tents, it is time for us to sally forth bravely, knowing that the Lord is God, and take them by surprise. We have looked badly enough of late that we might catch Satan off guard! And while we chase the enemy from the hills, keep going. Because the Americans "think the Lord is a god of the hills and not a god of the valleys, I will deliver this vast army into your hands, and you will know that I am the Lord." And we ought not delay—take some decisive action.

Is the Lord the God of the Southern Baptist Convention, the Nazarenes, the Church of God, the Assemblies of God, the Presbyterian Church of America, the Wycliffe Translators, the Overseas Missionary Fellowship? Is he not our God also?

We must: (1) Listen to the "prophet," that is the man of vision who knows God's Word and his world and who is able to interpret his will; (2) Slay the enemy (1 Kings 20:42) as well as encourage God's people; (3) Promote cross cultural missions. It has been proven repeatedly that a vigorous mission program is healthy for the church at home. Peter Wagner recounts a particular instance:

One of the churches that supported me and my family throughout our missionary career came up against a severe financial crisis some years ago. The official board of the church called an emergency meeting, and all knew ahead of time that something unusual had to be done if the church was not to be shipwrecked financially. Soon after the meeting began, the pastor said, "Folks, I have been praying a good deal about our situation. I think the Lord has spoken to me about a solution. As a way out of our financial problem, would you consider raising our missionary budget?"...It worked!...This is the kind of faith that God honors (ibid., p. 89).

(4) Work together. Differing ideas about doctrine and strategy are not fatal, but internecine warfare is. Berkshire Christian's recent history has left some strong differences of opinion and some considerable interpersonal tensions in its wake. A dispassionate study of causes and effects could prove most instructive. But petty ambition, the desire for personal vindication, and a too narrow allegiance to one's own preferences must be overcome.

(5) Remember that the *Israelites really prospered only during times of revival such as those under Uzziah, Hezekiah, and Josiah.* □

Freeman Barton currently works at the Learning Resources Center at Warner Southern College in Lake Wales, Florida. Before that he served on the faculty at Berkshire Christian College.

Portraits of Missionary Fervor

Are you looking for real-life accounts of vision, dedication, courage, sacrifice, creativity, and accomplishment? If so, you'll find them in the history of the world-wide expansion of Christianity. Ruth A. Tucker has captured these aspects of the cause of world missions for you in her powerful volume *From Jerusalem to Irian Jaya* (Zondervan Publishing House).

This book covers the 2,000 year old journey of the Christian faith from its beginning as a Jewish sect to its present position as the world's largest religion. Its author has a missionary heart, believes in world evangelism, and communicates the excitement of the whole enterprise effectively.

The backbone of the book consists of the lives and contributions of about a hundred representative missionaries from New Testament times to our own. Dr. Tucker has done her research carefully so that she gives us full and faithful pictures of these great missionaries. These men and women stand tall in their heroism and accomplishments. However, the author has the courage to recognize also their frailties, weaknesses, and shortcomings. And, as you meet them, you find yourself gaining the courage to believe that with God's help you too can help to reach the world for Christ.

Most of us, I'm afraid, are tragically ignorant of the thrilling story of the expansion of Christianity. As a matter of fact, Ralph Winter calls Christian missions, "the least understood effort in the annals of human achievement." *From Jerusalem to Irian Jaya* is the kind of book that will open your eyes to things that you'll wish you had learned long ago. After you've read it, you'll never again be able to think of Christianity as only what happens in your local church.

Dr. Tucker uses this volume to demonstrate that the story of world missions is fundamentally the story of the past two hundred years. When I realized this I thought immediately how Jesus used world missions as a sign of his return to this earth (the gospel "will be preached in the whole world...and then shall the end come" — Matthew 24:14).

She also presents the dimensions of the terrible prices that Christian missionaries have paid over the years: loneliness, discouragement, culture shock, disease, separation from children, conflicting demands from families and work, disagreements with fellow missionaries, money shortages, and even martyrdom.

Though the book emphasizes the biographies of missionaries, it does not neglect the various movements which have powerfully motivated the church to reach the entire globe: the Moravians, Women's Rights, Student Volunteer Movement, Faith Missions, and Third World pride. Nor, does it neglect to show the full range of specialized activities by which missionaries have carried on their work — things like evangelism, teaching, translating, church planting, medical missions, aviation, social service, smuggling, recording, and radio broadcasting.

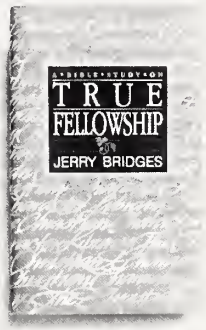
Reading the missionary biographies in this book, I sensed how much we Advent Christians need to record the story of our past in this great unfinished task of world evangelism. We have had missionaries every bit as heroic as those in *From Jerusalem to Irian Jaya*. Advent Christians today need to know about great people like Stanley and Lillian Harvey (Africa), Bertha Cassidy (China), Frank and Frances Toothe (China, Japan, Philippines) — to mention only a few. For we have had our vision, dedication, courage, sacrifice, creativity, and accomplishments. And we need the inspiration of their examples.

This book is easily the best volume on world missions that I have ever read. It packs solid inspiration into its pages, and I've enjoyed it so much that it's difficult for me to find fault with *From Jerusalem to Irian Jaya*. So instead of criticizing, let me just mention several issues that I wish could have been explored in great detail: the importance of Bible societies in providing the Scriptures as a tool for the missionaries; the key role of the emergence and growth of Bible colleges in providing missionary candidates; the effect of the end of World War II in multiplying missionary candidates; the appearance of the missionary conferences and faith promises as promotional tools; and the significance of Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship's periodic student mission conference at Urbana. If Dr. Tucker should write another book about these matters, I'm ready to read it.

Dr. David A. Dean teaches theology at Berkshire Christian College and serves

on the General Conference Missions Advisory Committee.

What is Christian Fellowship?



In writing *True Fellowship*, (Navpress) Jerry Bridges addresses a subject often misunderstood in light of biblical teaching. As he states in the preface to the book, fellowship has become a "watered down" term in today's Christian culture referring to shared social activity among Christians almost exclusively. Bridges' concern is that our flawed view of fellowship is robbing us as Christians of the dynamic relationships the term implies. Only by focusing on the biblical concept of fellowship can these relationships be fully enjoyed.

Early in the book, Bridges points out that fellowship must occur first vertically with God, before meaningful horizontal fellowship can take place. The Greek word often translated "fellowship," *koinonia*, leads us to both objective fact and subjective experience in this regard. Bridges emphasizes a vital union with God as the beginning of fellowship. Our koinoinia with God, the author stresses, is through our link to the "vine," Jesus Christ. It is this shared link with Christ that objectively and in reality makes all believers one in Bridges' premise.

Because of this shared union with Christ as His Body, horizontal fellowship is now possible. He deals with the many aspects of Christian fellowship in a refreshingly scriptural approach. Koinonia is presented in its New Testament force in relation to our partnership in the gospel, spiritual gifts, service, suffering, as well as its other forms, including social interaction. Personal responsibility and common accountability is presented admirably here.

I thoroughly enjoyed *True Fellowship* and it met my requirements for worthwhile reading. I grew as a Christian by reading it. Bridges' readable style and deep commitment to the Bible's teaching are definite strong points, as well as an obvious trademark. Bridges does tend to be a bit too brief at points, noticeably so in relation to support of a local ministry and in other areas of application.

Overall, I recommend the book as helpful. Obviously directed toward laymen, it could be utilized for a Sunday school elective discussion group or other small group study. Pastors and students can certainly benefit from this work as well. *True Fellowship* is a good beginning toward a better understanding of biblical koinonia.

Rev. Joe Pritchett pastors the Barbourville and Corbin Advent Christian Churches both in Kentucky.

Hostage Bound, Hostage Free

May 8, 1984. Beirut, Lebanon. Benjamin and Carol Weir step from their apartment for the two block walk to the Near East School of Theology. Benjamin Weir describes what followed; "We had gone only a short way when a car pulled up behind us and stopped. Two men got out..."What do you want?" I asked. I hardly understood the response, "I want you." With that, he grabbed my arm...I tried to resist...but he gave me a tremendous shove and forced me into the back of the seat."

For the next sixteen months, Benjamin Weir was held hostage at the hands of Hezbollah, the radical Shiite Moslem militia group with close ties to Iran. *Hostage Bound, Hostage Free* (Westminster Press, $12.95) is the Weirs' account of their ordeal. The book not only describes Benjamin Weirs' sixteen months of captivity but his wife, Carol's dealings with a host of governments and organizations in efforts to free her husband.

This book's strength lies in its moving description of the plight of hostages in war torn Lebanon. The American hostages held by Hezbollah have been forgotten by most Americans and the Weirs' account will remind readers of their plight. *Hostage Bound, Hostage Free* is also a testament of how faith in Jesus Christ can empower his followers to face what seem like impossible situations. The Weirs' commitment to Jesus Christ and to the Lebanese people shines through these pages wth brilliant clarity.

Hostage Bound, Hostage Free had one weakness in this reviewer's mind. On several occasions, Carol Weir refers to U.S. policy in the Middle East as being misguided. I wish they would have shared some specific ways they see those policies as being misguided along with some specific ideas for change.

This book is well written and interesting. Christians interested in world affairs and the Middle East will find *Hostage Bound, Hostage Free* well worth reading. □

—Bob Mayer

Caroline Michael
Director

Living By Grace Alone

For the first time in thirteen years of Christian living I'm really learning what it means to be "saved by grace." Through trials I've encountered during this past year, I've come to see that I not only have eternal life through Christ's righteousness alone; but that I must live each and every day in His strength and grace, apart from all human works.

This sounds simple and obvious, but the task of dying to all self-righteous living and realizing that I am still just a "sinner saved by grace" has been a humbling challenge. You see, it's easy for me, having been a Christian for over thirteen years and being in a place of spiritual leadership, to allow pride to creep in and minimize the effectiveness of God's grace in my life.

As I have grown in the knowledge of God's Word and in the customs of the "Christian" lifestyle, I've increasingly begun to lose the zeal of my first love toward Christ. I often forget the fact that I'm dependent upon Him for the ability to live a godly life, apart from all self-effort.

To illustrate what I mean, I'll share some of this year's experiences that have made me reflect upon the necessity of living by grace alone.

Questioning my identity

About a year ago my husband and I moved to Southern California to begin planting a church. This move, combined with adjusting to my role as a pastor's wife, brought me into an identity crisis and time of introspection. I expected a lot of myself because of what I thought a pastor's wife should be; yet I felt so inadequate. This feeling penetrated every area of my thinking. I eventually found myself falling deep into depression and despair. I knew my depressed, negative thoughts were not pleasing to God, and therefore I felt that He couldn't possibly accept me in my condition. Of course, this feeling only worsened my depression.

Eventually, I realized that I was looking to myself to be perfect rather than relying upon Christ's righteousness and power to enable me to live a godly life. Through this valley of confusion and self-doubt, God made me come to grips with the meaning of the free gift of salvation and what it means to live by grace. I began to see that I was trying by my self-efforts and spiritual knowledge to perfect my life and become more acceptable to God.

Now I realize that trying to perfect my life through my own efforts is just another man-centered form of living by works and not by grace alone. I know now that even when I'm at my worst and even when I think I should be "spiritually mature," it's only God's grace, his work in my life, and his righteousness in me that makes me acceptable to Him. I will never grow to a point of needing His righteousness less, simply because I have lived the Christian life longer.

So many verses have come to life through my time of testing. For ex-

ample, John 15:5, "I am the vine; you are the branches...apart from me you can do nothing." Also 1 Corinthians 15:9-10, "I am the least of the apostles and do not even deserve to be called an apostle... But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace to me was not without effect. No, I worked harder than all of them — yet not I, but the grace of God that was with me." These verses plus others that I have read before without conviction, have become meaningful to me through this time of reevaluation.

Christ's sacrifice is more precious to me now than when I first invited Him to be my Savior. It wasn't hard for me to see my desperate need of His forgiveness and grace as an unsaved person. Now I see that even with Christian desires and a new life, my utter depravity and need for His constant grace is as great as ever.

Even as a Christian, I'm constantly falling short of His standards and I now appreciate more fully the supreme price He paid for my hopelessly sinful condition. I understand better now why Paul could say he was "chief of sinners" and yet still know that he could be used greatly of God. He had learned that nothing good came from himself but from the One who lived in Him.

Through Christ, God accepts me

In the same way, I am learning to overcome my sense of self-condemnation and depression by realizing I'm acceptable to God on the basis of Christ's sacrifice; not because of my performance as a "mature Christian." I believe it is in this recognition that I can grow to be useful to God in a way I never have before. For to the extent that I am emptied of self and full of God's sufficiency, He is free to do His will through me unhindered by my human works.

If we wish to find the freedom and joy intended for us as Christians, we must forsake all self-righteousness, all claims of self-accomplishment, and allow Christ to be our all. He is our only basis of worthiness and our only source of value in Christian service.

Perhaps this concept is easily accepted and implemented by other Christians. For me, it's been a death-to-life experience of learning. I believe this is part of what Christ meant when He said, "If you wish to find your life, you must lost it." In other words, if we wish to find the freedom and joy intended for us as Christians, we must forsake all self-righteousness, all claims of self-accomplishment, and allow Christ to be our all. He is our only basis of worthiness and our only source of value in Christian service.

It may be easy to say we are saved by grace; but to be shown the truth of this statement in a death-to-self experience has made all the difference for me. It's never an easy experience to be crucified to self, and I'm sure the process will never be complete until I see my Lord face to face. Until that time I am grateful for being brought low, that I might see and appreciate more of His wonderful grace.

My prayer is that I may someday say with Paul, "I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me" (Galatians 2:20). □

Valerie Halloran

Valerie finds fulfillment in being involved in her husband's ministry as well as in using her gifts in writing and singing her own music. She recently recorded an album of original songs. Paul and Valerie are serving our church at Chatsworth Lake, CA. They now have four children.

News & Notes

Pocahontas Conference

The ladies of the East War, West Virginia Advent Christian Church hosted the Pocahontas WHFMS for their annual meeting. A two-act skit was directed by Nora Tiller presenting the positive and negative ways to plan and conduct an effective WHFMS meeting. Louise Hayslette shared in a devotional time. President Alma Harvey encouraged each local to use the services of a Trained Resource Person (TRP) before May 1988, and to attend the National WHFMS Convention in Charleston, WV in June. Elected officers are: President Alma Harvey, Vice-president Jannas Harrington, Secretary Jo Edith White, Treasurer Bonnie Harman, Spiritual Life Chairman Nora Tiller, and Auxiliary Superintendents Carol Chambers and Joyce Bailey.

Southern Region WHFMS

This annual Convention of Southern Region women at Camp Dixie in Eastern North Carolina began with an evening program including special music by the mission choir of Banner Chapel of Benson, North Carolina. Director of World Missions for the Advent Christian General Conference Harold Patterson was the keynote speaker giving a mission update.

Director of Women's Ministries Caroline Michael posed the question in her devotional thoughts, "What reflection are we producing?" The secret of a good reflection is heart-occupation with Christ. Mrs. Michael presented highlights of women's ministries from the national perspective. Linda Register of the Eastern North Carolina Conference gave the welcome which was responded to by Alabama WHFMS President Betty Cyphers. National President Marian Wrigley addressed the delegates and installed the elected officers: President Eloise Robertson, Vice-president Ann Jackson, Secretary Ruby McLamb, Treasurer Peggy Boston, and Auxiliary Superintendents Adele Carter, Frances Adams, and Marjorie Provost.

Elsie Kirby of Dowling Park, Florida gave an update on nursing home projects and their value to the Advent Christian Village nursing staff. Vice-president Ann Jackson led a memorial service and Palma Neal and Marjorie Denius sang "He Giveth More Grace."

A significant statistic to report is a gain in membership in each WHFMS Conference in the Southern region during 1986. From the information reported to the national office, their total membership for 1986 was 16% higher than in 1985. Keep up the enthusiasm!

Washington Women's Retreat

"Fill My Cup" was the theme for the 9th annual Western Washington WHFMS retreat recently held at Oak Harbor on Puget Sound. Counselor and psychotherapist Char Dillon of Aurora, Illinois was the retreat leader. The forty-eight participants focused on how to examine their sense of self development. They looked at the processes that cause development to go awry which leads to patterns of unhappiness in oneself and in relationships. Char shared principles from both the Bible and psychology as a means to begin or continue the process of healing or enhancing self-esteem. Pauline Craven and Trudy Forbes were music coordinators.

Columbia, South Carolina

President Pat Schumpert reported that all ladies of their church were invited to a Philippine Fest. The menu consisted of Filipino foods and the program featured slides and information about our Philippine missionaries.

Mendota, Illinois

Several unusual activities of the Mendota WHFMS include participating on the radio during the week of World Day of Prayer and the week of World Community Day and promoting a church dinner in honor of former pastor and wife, Mr. & Mrs. Myron Buker.

Ferguson, North Carolina

The ladies of Beaver Creek WHFMS have unique fund-raising projects which include selling rabbit cakes, preparing a poor-man's supper, and a Christmas bazaar. These active women sponsor baby showers, hold an Easter egg hunt for community children, and make special recognitions on Mothers' and Fathers' Days.

Spring Rally at Camp Dixie

Peggy Boston of Banner Chapel, Benson, North Carolina spoke on the subject, "How Children Effect Marriage" for the Eastern North Carolina Conference WHFMS Spring Rally held recently at Camp Dixie.

My Real Identity

In God's Word we are given key answers to our identity as believers. Have you paused to think of the Bible's answers to *Who am I?*

I am God's child. John 1:12

I am the salt of the earth. Matthew 5:13

I am the light of the world. Matthew 5:14

I am His disciple because I have love for others. John 13:35

I am at peace with God. Romans 5:1

I am made right in God's sight by faith. Romans 5:1

I am rejoicing in troubles, because through them God is building me up and making me strong. Romans 5:3-5

I am reconciled to God through the death of His Son. Romans 5:10

I am dead to my "old self" and I am no longer a slave to sin. Romans 6:6

I am a recipient of eternal life through Jesus Christ. Romans 6:23

I am confident that all things work together for good. Romans 8:28

I am being conformed to the image of Jesus Christ. Romans 8:29

I am indwelt by Christ. Ephesians 3:17

I am growing up in all aspects of Christ. Ephesians 4:15

I am confident of His finishing His work in me. Philippians 1:6

I am guarded by God's peace. Philippians 4:7

I am able to do all things through Christ who strengthens me. Philippians 4:13

I am having all my needs met according to His riches. Philippians 4:19

I am strengthened with all power, according to His glorious might, for the attaining of all steadfastness and patience. Colossians 1:11

I am inseparable from God's love. Romans 8:35-39

I am a sweet aroma manifesting the presence of God wherever I go. 2 Corinthians 2:14

I am a new creation in Christ; the old has passed away. 1 Corinthians 5:17

I am loved and have been washed from my sins by His blood. Revelation 1:5

Mission Prayer Partnership

July

18 **Pray** that the Lord will raise up Urban missionaries for the Advent Christian Church.

19 **Pray** for an Advent Christian Mission Planting effort in Mexico.

20 **Pray** for the Summer Ministries Teams that they might have journeying mercies and that they will touch many lives for Christ.

21 **Pray** for Rev. **Bryce** and **Barbara Whiting** as they prepare to serve as Advent Christian missionaries.

22 **Praise** the Lord for **Steve** and **Ann Lay** and the exciting and productive ministry that they have accomplished for Christ in **Japan.**

23 **Pray** for **Margaret Helms** as she prepares to return to the Philippine field.

24 **Pray** for our retired missionaries and **praise** God for their contribution to His work in the furtherance of the Gospel.

25 **Pray** for military chaplains that God will use them to touch many service men's lives and their families.

26 **Pray** for the continued contributions for the **Capital Funds Drive** to build churches overseas.

27 **Pray** for our national pastors in the **Philippines.**

28 **Pray** for our national pastors in **Japan.**

29 **Pray** for our national pastors in **Malaysia.**

30 **Pray** for our national pastors in **India.**

31 **Pray** for our national pastors in **Nigeria.**

August

1 **Pray** for **Marion Damon** as she teaches young men in evangelism.

2 **Pray** for the Advent Christian national radio ministry that many would respond and that new churches might be added.

3 **Pray** for **Floyd Powers** as he carries the heavy duties as Field Superintendent in **Japan.**

4 **Pray** for **Musa Powers** as she assists her husband in the many missionary duties they share together.

5 Pray for **David Vignali** and the many duties that rest upon his shoulders.
6 Pray for **Alice Brown** as she directs the rapidly growing **Oro Bible College.**
7 Pray for **Frank Jewett** as he continues to see growth in the **San Vicente Fellowship.**
8 Pray for **Judy Jewett** as she assists her husband in the mission work in **Cebu.**
9 Pray for a greater Advent Christian vision to start new churches.
10 Pray for our young people involved in **Teen Missions** as they prepare to return home.
11 Pray for E.A. Akpan and the exciting ministry of the **Nigerian Advent Christian Conference.**
12 Pray for encouragement for our Home Mission pastors.
13 Praise the Lord for the outpouring of His Holy Spirit and power on our mission fields.
14 Pray for **Thambusamy** and **Victoria Devairakkam** and their growing work in **Malaysia.**
15 Pray for **Francis** and **Lyne Ssebikindu** in the difficult and challenging work in Memphis, Tennessee.
16 Pray for **Barbara White** as she ministers with the congregation of **Kodaikanal.**
17 Pray for the future of our Bible Institute in **Japan** and that the Lord would send us students.
18 Pray for **Beryl Joy Hollis** that she might be a real encouragement to the pastors she works with.
19 Pray for the **Directors** at the Advent Christian Headquarters and the great responsibilities that they carry.
20 Pray for the Advent Christians in **China** that God will continue to sustain them.
21 Pray for the **Urban Ministries Task Force** that God will give them wisdom in planning to reach our cities for Christ.
22 Pray for our Advent Christian young people that God will mightily touch their lives and direct their steps in His service.
23 Pray for the growth of the New Church Builders Union Fund here at home.
24 Pray that the Lord will minister food to the many hungry of the world and show us what we can do to help.
25 Pray for **Lucas** and **Beulah Devasahayam** and their burden to reach thousands of Tamil speaking Malaysians for Christ.
26 Pray for **Bessie Smith** that the Lord would bless her and guide her in this time as she seeks God's will for future missionary service.
27 Pray for the **Regional Superintendents** that they might be a real encouragement and help to pastors and churches.
27 Pray and ask the Lord what He would have you do for the advance of missions.
28 Pray that the Lord would give your church a real missionary vision.
29 Praise the Lord for the many souls that are being won to Christ on all our mission fields.
30 Pray for **Rev. Austin** and **Dorothy Warriner** as they return to new challenges in their ministry in **Japan.**
31 Pray for the **missionary children** that God would grant them a special blessing today.

September

1 Pray that the Lord would give Advent Christian people a great burden for a prayer ministry.
2 Pray for the future of **Berkshire Christian College** and its training of our future leadership.
3 Pray for our young people as they head back to schools and colleges that God will give them a blessed and healthful year ahead.
4 Pray for your pastor that God would mightily annoint and bless him especially this fall.
5 Pray for a denominational wide revival with souls being saved.
6 Pray that the Lord would raise up **Hispanic** workers for an outreach in our land.
7 Pray that the Lord would call many as laborers into His fields of harvest.
8 Pray for **Dave Vignali** and his ministry of encouragement to others.
9 Pray for **Frank** and **Judy Jewett** that God will let them see continued fruit for their labors.
10 Pray for **Marion Damon** for wisdom and strength as she guides our India Field Council.
11 Pray for **Rev. Floyd** and **Musa Powers** as they seek to guide and encourage the Japanese church.
12 Pray for the leaders of **King's Jewels** and **Junior Action** that God would help them in teaching our little ones about Christian service.
13 Pray for **Mrs. Caroline Michael** and the **WHFM Societies** throughout our denomination that God would richly bless them this day.
14 Pray for **Alice Brown** that she impart her zeal for evangelism to those in **Oro Bible College.**
15 Pray that the Lord would bring many men into our churches.
16 Pray for evangelistic Bible studies starting in many of our churches.
17 Praise the Lord for the many decisions for Christ made at our camps this summer.
18 Pray for **Margaret Helms** and her duties as Philippine Field Superintendent and grant her a special blessing on this her birthday.

Repentance: A Forgotten Word

Many remember Mickey Cohen, infamous gangster of the postwar era. One night Cohen attended an evangelistic meeting and seemed interested. Realizing what a dramatic impact his conversion could have on the world, many Christian leaders began visiting him. After one long night session, he was urged to open the door and let Christ in, based on Revelation 3:20. Cohen responded.

But as the months passed, people saw no change in his life of crime. When confronted, he responded that no one had told him he would have to give up his work or his friends. After all, there were Christian football players, Christian cowboys, Christian politicians; why not a Christian gangster?

It was only then that he was told about repentance. And at that point he wanted nothing to do with Christianity.

What happened to Mickey Cohen is an unhappy but unfortunately not so uncommon illustration of what happens when in our zeal to win people to Christ, we try to make the gospel more "appealing."

The demand of repentance

Repentance is one of the hard demands we often ignore. Contemporary sermons and books on the subject are rare. Because it can be an offense, as I discovered the morning I confronted twenty-five affluent business leaders with the need to repent, Christians often don't want to talk about it.

Jesus' evangelistic message, on the other hand, was plain and pointed: "Repent and believe in the gospel" (Mark 1:15). Like John the Baptist before him, Jesus consistently preached repentance. It is, in fact, the keynote of His message, the cornerstone upon which faith must rest.

To many, repentance conjures up images of breast beating, self-flagellation, or a monastic life of self-denial in sackcloth and ashes. The biblical meaning, however, is far less theatrical. Paul describes it as "sorrow over sin." "I now rejoice," he wrote to the Corinthians, "that you were made sorrowful to the point of repentance...the sorrow that is according to the will of God produces repentance without regret, leading to salvation but the sorrow of the world produces death."

Repentance is, as one inmate in South Carolina said, "when you are so sorry that it hurts." When we truly understand the condition in us that causes us to lie, cheat, and hate; we are inescapably made sorrowful. And that sorrow leads to a desire to change, to want the righteousness of God in place of our own sinful selves.

A profound change of heart

The Greek work for repentance found in the New Testament is *metanoia: meta*, meaning change, and *noia*, meaning mind. Repentance, as Christ preached it, is a changing of the mind, the intellect, the values. That inevitably produces a profound change of the heart and emotions, a total radical transformation from seeking to please self to seeking to please God. Repentance leads to nothing less than a human revolution.

The majority in prison with whom we work understand repentance; they can identify with the poignant moments of Jesus' death on the cross, with two thieves hanging on either side. The first thief saw Jesus as a way out. "Are You not the Christ? Save Yourself and us!" he taunted. It's the way all of us instinctively react in tight spots. We call upon God to save our skins.

But the second thief understood the deeper spiritual reality. "We are receiving what we deserve for our deeds," he rebuked the first. "But this man has done nothing wrong." *That is repentance* — seeing one's sin and recognizing the holiness of God.

"Remember me," he then asked Jesus. And our Lord replied, "Truly, I say to you, today you will be with Me in paradise." *That is the result of repentance.*

Repentance is demanded not only for our individual sins, but for the sins for which we inescapably share responsibility as well. We are part and parcel of the society in which we live and the church we belong to.

One of my favorite Old Testament figures is Nehemiah. He clearly understood the need to repent for himself and for the sins of his people. Before undertaking the seemingly impossible task of bringing the exiled Jews back to Jerusalem and rebuilding its walls, Nehemiah confessed "the sins of the sons of Israel which we have sinned against thee; I and my father's house have sinned." A repentant Nehemiah was greatly used by God; revival followed in the land.

The issue today is whether we are to be a church of Mickey Cohens or a church of Nehemiahs. Just as there is no individual salvation without repentance, so there can be no spiritual power in an unrepentant church. Southern Baptist scholar Foy Valentine sums it up in his magnificent book *What Do You Do After You Say Amen?* "Without a fundamental change of mind about all sin, a stuttering, stumbling, stalling church can never act redemptively in a sinful world."

And the church acting redemptively in a fallen, sick world is the only key to survival and the hope of mankind. ☐

From "Who Speaks for God." Used with permission.

AC04343
University of North Carolina
Serials Dept Davis Library
080 A
Chapel Hill, NC 27514

ADVENT CHRISTIAN
GENERAL CONFERENCE
P.O. Box 23152
14601 Albemarle Road
Charlotte, NC 28212

C286.1 / A24

Advent Christian WITNESS

September 1987

Violence in the Home

How Can Churches and Christians Help?

page four

Member
epa
Evangelical Press Association

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
Robert J. Mayer

MISSIONS
Harold Patterson

WHFMS
Caroline M. Michael

GRAPHIC ARTS
Linda Perault

TYPESETTING
Susan Gettis

EFMA
MEMBER MISSION

EVANGELICAL COUNCIL FOR FINANCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY
ECFA
MEMBER
The symbol of trust

Advent Christian Witness (ISSN 0741-4307) is published monthly except for a combined July-August issue, 11 times a year, by the Advent Christian General Conference of America, 14601 Albemarle Road, P.O. Box 23152, Charlotte, NC 28212. Postmaster: Send address changes to *Advent Christian Witness*, P.O. Box 23152, Charlotte, NC.

Policy: As the official publication of the Advent Christian General Conference of America, the *Advent Christian Witness* publishes the teachings of the Advent Christian Church and promotes the task of evangelism both in North America and throughout the world.

Rates in the U.S. and Canada: one year, $11.00. Single Copy, $1.00. Overseas one year, $14.00.

All articles and materials are copyright ©1987 by the Advent Christian General Conference unless otherwise indicated. Permission to reprint available upon request. The views expressed in this magazine are those of the author and may not necessarily reflect those of the editor or the Advent Christian General Conference.

from the editor

Good Thinking About Peace and Freedom

For the last twenty years, questions about war, peace, and nuclear weapons have been hot topics for political and religious debate. Denominations across the religious spectrum issued statements, studies, and declarations calling for everything from cultural exchanges to unilateral disarmament by the United States. Even the so-called "religious right" chimed in with assertions that the only sure way to guarantee peace is through military strength.

The tragedy of most Church statements about social issues like war and peace is they articulate political idealogy more than Christian thinking. Why do church pronouncements look more like political party platforms than reasoned Christian assessments?

The National Association of Evangelicals asked the same question. Seeing the need for sound Christian thinking about war and peace issues, the Association has developed its *Peace, Freedom, and Security Studies* (PFSS) program. The program guidelines have now appeared and they provide a refreshing change from the tired political cliches that characterize mainline and fundamentalist thinking.

Though the guidelines represent only a preliminary report, this editor found several important points missing from most church pronouncements:

- PFSS is skeptical "of all schemes of social perfectibility short of the final kingdom." While it's important that Christians work to eliminate conflict on the global level, we must be skeptical of idealogies like Marxism that promise a perfect world apart from Christ's second coming.
- The guidelines assert that Christians cannot divorce thinking about war and peace from Biblical teaching concerning human rights, the nature of totalitarianism, and Biblical justice. "We must be concerned simultaneously with peace, international human rights, democratic values, and national security."
- PFSS presents a good understanding of the relationship between the Christian faith and democracy; "While the Bible does not teach democratic theory, democratic theory rests on Biblical insights about the inalienable dignity of the human person. As a result, Christians should not be afraid of affirming their support for such institutions and should seek to extend the benefits of such institutions to others, especially those living under totalitarian tyranny."

The *Peace, Freedom* and *Security Studies* are a good first step toward rescuing Christian thinking about war and peace from the political and idealogical passions that have been passed off on the the church since the 1960s. Advent Christians concerned about war and peace issues (hopefully that includes all of us) should give these guidelines serious attention. □

You can order a copy of the Peace, Freedom, and Security Studies *program guidelines from the National Association of Evangelicals, P.O. Box 28, Wheaton, IL 60189. One copy costs $1.00.*

Volume 35 Number 8

Advent Christian WITNESS

September 1987

FEATURES

Wife Abuse: How Can We Help? Phyllis Satterfield 4
Domestic violence harms many families. What can Christians do to help? Phyllis Satterfield, an Advent Christian working with family abuse victims, offers some practical help for Christians and churches.

Let's Head for the Slopes Clayton Blackstone 8
Pastor Blackstone shares how learning to ski taught him some valuable Christian principles.

330,000 Christians Martyred Every Year 10
Much of the world has become hostile to the gospel. Christian missionaries and nationals face physical and emotional persecution for their obedience to Christ's gospel.

Jesus, the Master Mender David S. McCarthy 12
Our Lord delights in healing our emotional wounds and restoring our broken lives.

Developing an Evangelical Consensus Mark Valcourt 15
The pastor of the LaGrange, Illinois Advent Christian Church reviews a new book dealing with Christian attitudes toward abortion.

Advent Christians: How Healthy Are We? Melvin White 16
A veteran Advent Christian pastor and writer challenges us to learn the practice of humility and forgiveness.

ON THE COVER

Violence in the home? The unthinkable has become real for many families. How can Christian people and congregations respond effectively? Phyllis Satterfield provides some answers beginning on page 4.

photo by Jim Whitmer Studios

DEPARTMENTS

From the Editor 2

Women's Ministries 18

Prayer Partnership 21

Mission Directory 22

Charles Colson 23

Wife Abuse: How Can We Help?

Phyllis Satterfield

Abuse? In the Christian home? In this church community? Surely you joke? No—abuse within the family, between Christian couples is no laughing matter. The whole range, from subtle, socially acceptable (!) emotional abuse to extreme violence, happens in Christian families. Spouse abuse, or more bluntly, wife abuse, is an ancient problem which has begun to come out into the open. After child abuse was acknowledged and steps taken to deal with it, the way was opened to admit the abuse of women within their families is also a widespread problem.

Family violence knows no bounds

With awareness comes a pressing need to recognize this problem exists in Christian homes in the same numbers as the rest of society. One-half of *all* married women are believed to suffer physical abuse at least once in their marriage. The battered wife is our neighbor; she cries out for recognition. It is, I suggest, at the local church level that human, caring interaction is crucial. As essential as it is for communication and ministry to take place here, it is also where we most often fall short.

In speaking with groups within the church, I find most often willingness to help and confusion as to how best the victim in our midst can be recognized and helped. I also find the old, false stereotype; this problem is confined to lower-class people, to minority people, to other people. The attitude often is it's people outside the church who do this to each other. Not true! I suggest it's important we recognize family violence knows no bounds. Anyone can find themselves facing this problem within their own family.

It is difficult for Christians to admit to abuse. There has been a belief that somehow believers are protected from such distasteful acts. There is often a magical quality about this sort of thinking. At times we go so far as to teach people that if they are good Christians, these things won't happen to them.

Traditionally the church's attitude has been one of silence. This has been unhelpful to the worst degree. In fairness, society as a whole has turned away. Only recently has attention been focused on violence in the family. The church has had even more difficulty realizing that Christian families share this problem with others outside the religious community. It's an ugly reality for any of us to have to face that often Biblical passages have been misused to justify abuse.

As a first step toward recognition of and ministry to these victims in our midst, we need to be aware of the difficulty a victim of family violence has in facing this problem herself, let alone admitting it to someone else. Christian women tend to believe; "Maybe I'm not as good a Christian as I was trying to be." This felt guilt and shame tends to close the woman off from her church community at the time she needs it the most. She tends to withdraw from church attendance at this point. Often, the church community, which has noticed something is wrong, and unsure or afraid of what to do, will let her go, perhaps with a sense of unacknowledged relief.

A fair share of the victims of family violence do turn first to trusted church members and or clergy for support and counsel. It is important as they come to be sensitive to the problem; individually you can work to become a responsive listener, alert to what is being said, and also to what is not being said;

what does she mean, "He hits me." Often the clues are subtle, and we don't hear them. Conversely, we must work to become sensitive speakers. It's possible to give off negative signals that may act as obstacles to women seeking to reveal their home situations reality.

Effective ways to help

There is a great deal you can do to minister to an abused woman if you are willing. It is important as she comes to you to be in touch with your own feelings; be aware of your strengths and also of the limits of your relationship to her. She must make the decision what it is she needs to do. No matter how well intentioned you may be, whatever her decision, she must live with its consequences. You cannot tell her what to do.

By coming, she has placed a great deal of faith in you, perhaps even her safety is in your trust! Keep her confidence! Remember, there are no hard and fast rules to follow. However, there are several suggestions that may help you to minister more effectively.

Listen to her, believe her. Allow her to define the abuse. Remember, what you may think is abusive she may not be ready to define as such. Perhaps at this time the one thing she needs most is someone to listen and believe in her. The worst thing that anyone can do is imply she did something to "ask for" the abuse.

Accept her feelings. It is important she be given all the room she needs to express how she feels. It is also important that you do not allow your own anxiety to interfere, but to face the issue with her in open communication.

The opportunity to express her feelings takes priority over practical solutions. However, encourage her to see a doctor if the abuse has been physical. Some abusers are very careful to strike where injuries will not be visible. Some injuries may be internal. A doctor often needs to be consulted. To repeat, help her make her own decision, allow her this privilege. You can help her think through her situation. It is your purpose to support and guide; it is not to rescue.

Help her list her practical resources; be aware of what your community offers. What support system is available, is there a group for battered women functioning in your community, a hotline or shelter? What is the attitude of law enforcement officials? What is their training? You can point out resources you may see, other options she may be too close to the problem to see.

God does not will abuse

Understand her. This may well be the most difficult. It's discouraging to do your best in helping her get out of a difficult situation only to see her go back; it is here that many who would help "burn-out." Try to remember the forces that act to pull her back are powerful, as are the traditions keeping her there, and her overwhelming fear of the future alone. You must remember she clings to the hope this time he means it, and he will change—do not underestimate the power of that hope.

Remind her that God loves with an unconditional love, any thinking that she deserves abuse needs to be addressed as nonsense. God does not will abuse; it is not possible to use the Bible to justify abuse. Abuse of her body, the temple of God (1 Cor. 6:19-20), is never justified by Scripture.

You are involved; you, a Christian, are important in the lives you touch. It is vital as victims of family abuse turn to you, you are sensitive to the problem and can offer alternative solutions.

As Christians we have special gifts, not the least of which is our conviction that prayer works. Pray with her.

What to do in an abusive situation

Keeping in mind how scattered are the supportive agencies available to help women who are victimized within their families, I would like to suggest possible steps a woman finding herself in an abusive situation may take to protect herself.

Remember, once a violent act occurs in a relationship, the violence will almost always occur again. In fact, it tends to become worse, more frequent and more severe. This will happen in spite of the man's promises to change. It is important to think ahead and plan what to do in the case of another attack.

Before an attack:

First: Remember, you are *not* alone. You are not the cause of

someone else's behavior, nor do you deserve to be abused. You have a right to expect and demand help, protection, and respect. You have both a right and a responsibility to make your own choices.

Second: Decide what it will take for you to leave your home, and plan ahead for that day so you will be prepared.

Third: Tell others about what is happening. Remember, you have no cause for shame. Make contacts. Find out what is available in your area.

Fourth: Gather in a safe place the important items you will need; that is, essential things you will need in order to obtain legal assistance or Public Aid; namely, records, birth certificates, marriage license, credit cards, bank books, phone numbers, blank checks, medical cards. I also suggest to women they put safely away the small items such as pictures that they treasure. These are the things most often destroyed.

When an attack occurs:

Call for help; scream. Remember, you have nothing to be ashamed of. Get away; run if you can. Go to a neighbor, relative, or a shelter if one is available.

Call the police. Laws vary from state to state, but police must help you, at least to transport you away to a safe place.

When you are safe, seek medical attention. Save evidence, copies of medical records, police reports, dated photographs, statements from others who may have seen or heard.

Talk to someone. There is a hotline number available in almost all parts of the country. The police or sheriff should be able to supply it. Remember, it almost always becomes worse over time. Know also you cannot love him or pray him into health. His behavior is his responsibility. The safety and perhaps the very lives of you and your children may depend upon your willingness to act. You are in a more dangerous situation if you do nothing than if you act.

Allow me to recommend obtaining a copy of *No Place To Hide* by Olsen/Peterson (published by Tyndale House Publishers, Wheaton, Illinois, 1982). It is an excellent Christian resource. □

Used in preparing parts of this article was A Handbook for Domestic Violence Victims *published by the Illinois Coalition for Domestic Violence. Used with permission and available through:*
The Illinois Coalition Against Domestic Violence
931 South Fourth Street
Springfield, Illinois 62703

A member of the Aurora, Illinois Advent Christian Church, Rev. Phyllis Satterfield serves as Women's Program Director for Family Shelter Service in Glen Ellyn, Ill. A graduate of Aurora University and Northern Baptist Theological Seminary, she was ordained by the Prairie States Conference in 1984. She and her husband Louis have been married for nearly 30 years. They have five children and seven grandchildren.

THE WITNESS talks with Phyllis Satterfield

How do those who work with victims of domestic violence define abuse? Abuse usually means physical violence such as punching or choking, but it also may mean threatening, harassing, or willfully depriving a dependent person.

Is domestic violence really as prevalent as the media would have us believe? Wifebeating is the most common but least reported crime in the United States. Those who work in criminal justice claim that up to one-half of all wives will be beaten at least once by their husbands. Over 40% of the women who are murdered in this country are killed by their husbands or lovers, usually after having been beaten by those men for years.

Do you see any evidence that abuse is confined to certain socio-economic groups? On the contrary, abuse happens in all classes and races. It occurs at every level of income and education.

Even within evangelical churches? Absolutely. It exists in every church, every church! I recently had a call from the senior pastor of a 1400 member church who was dealing with a case for the first time in his career. He said, "I never expected to face this in a conservative, missionary-minded congregation." I replied, "Pastor, it is a statistical probability that you have more than one case. You simply have found one person who trusts you enough to talk about it."

If wife and child abuse is so prevalent, why aren't pastors deluged with people seeking relief? You have to remember that it takes a tremendous amount of trust for an

abused woman to seek help. These victims feel ashamed and guilty. They usually think that the violence they have experienced is their fault.

But isn't there often truth in that feeling? Don't victimized women sometimes cause the violent event? A man may have reason to be angry, but he had no right to express anger with physical violence. Rather than being a right, violent actions are a crime. Striking another person is against the law.

By the way, one of the worst responses a pastor can make to an abused counselee is, "What did you do to make him react so violently?" This only compounds the victim's already low self-image.

You've pointed out what a counselor shouldn't say. How about a few hints to make us more effective in dealing with victims of abuse? First, affirm her courageous act in coming to you. Point out that it takes nerve to talk about such traumatic episodes.

Second, believe everything she says. Many women say that they have tried to communicate their problem only to be met by skepticism. We find that victims of abuse usually minimize the violence they have experienced. You are probably hearing just the tip of the iceberg.

Reassure her that the abuse was not her fault. It is not God's will that she be abused and violated, all blame rests with the one who assaulted her.

Finally, assure her that all her statements are confidential. You are not to tell anyone else about her situation expect a helping agency when she has given you permission to do so.

Where may one find these helping agencies? Every state has shelter programs, and they serve wide areas. Usually these agencies are listed in the phone book under shelters or human services. Your local Sheriff's Department will also have information about services available in your region.

Where may a concerned individual find more information about ministry to the abused?
The shelters and helping agencies in your community have printed materials. For example, our Illinois Coalition Against Domestic Violence (937 South Fourth St., Springfield, IL 62703) offers a booklet, *Handbook for Domestic Violence*

Victims, that provides practical information for both the abused and those who counsel them.

A resource for pastors is a publication called, *Doorway to Response; The Role of Clergy in Ministry with Battered Women.* This book is available for $7.45 (includes shipping and handling charges) from Interfaith Committee Against Domestic Violence, 615 South Fifth St., Springfield, IL 62703.

Can a pastor say anything from the pulpit that will make a difference in the way men react at home? I don't think many of the clergy recognize their authoritative role. Few seem to appreciate that they have an influence that is really quite powerful. I wish that pastors would try to counter the idea that the doctrine of submission allows for physical and emotional abuse. Whatever interpretation you give to "submission," there is no biblical basis for hurting one's mate or children.

Do those in the helping professions face the danger of burnout as they try to ease the pain of abused persons? You feel assaulted spiritually. After all, everyone wants to believe that the family is a loving, growing unit, not a situation where great pain is going to occur. I've found that burnout is much more likely if you try to push someone into making a decision instead of insisting that they make the choice themselves. Many battered wives make a choice to return to the abuser, so if you try to break their relationship you'll quickly become discouraged.

I find satisfaction knowing that I've made a difference, whatever the wife chooses. She knows that she has options after talking with me, and understands that she doesn't have to put up with abuse.

How may local congregations become better informed about this subject? Shelters and similar agencies are eager to spread word of their work. They will provide speakers free of charge to church groups, and will offer literature for those who want to explore the topic in more detail. In addition, churches all over the country celebrate "Peace At Home Week" in early October. Bulletin inserts describe what an abused person should do during and after an attack, and mention local helps that are available. By the way, an appropriate Scripture for that event is Psalm 55, especially verses 4, 8, 12 and 13. □

Let's Head for the Slopes

Clayton Blackstone

"There is a need in all of us for controlled danger, for an activity that puts us on the edge of life."

It's obvious that the champion surfer who spoke these words probably wasn't a New Englander like me. Those raised there have a reputation for being conservative, traditional, and slow to respond to change. (I'll leave the task of determining the truth of such perceptions to the sociologists!) Speaking for myself, risk taking is not my favorite sport. I'd rather invest my IRA in a certificate of deposit at a local bank at 6% than take the risk of mutual funds with a possible yield of 20%.

I'll go without something rather than go into debt and risk not being able to make the payments. I analyze a situation to death before making a decision to move, fearing a possible mistake.

Ready for a challenge

Imagine my parents surprise when I wrote to tell them of my skiing adventure during the winter of 1985, our first one west of the Mississippi. (It may have only served to confirm their suspicion that the West was sure to corrupt their eldest son?)

In a moment of acute weakness, I allowed our youth advisor, Alan Schmirler, to talk me into spending a day on the slopes. Since Alan never does anything half-heartedly, I should

have smelled danger, but my usually sensitive sixth sense failed me. Upon our arrival at the lodge, he helped me get fitted with boots, skis and poles, introduced me to a few basic tips on survival, and left me waiting for the instructor while he went off to attack the mountain.

Something spiritual seemed to be happening inside me. I felt ready for the challenge, unconscious of the possible dangers lurking in the shadows of the mountain. The snow sparkled. I anxiously anticipated my commitment to master the unknown. Before the sun set that evening I would be king of the hill (well, at least I would not be its slave).

By the time the group lesson began, I had made it all the way to the bottom of the Bunny Hill without falling...twice. Intoxicated by early success, I listened to the instructor with a mixture of intensity and cockiness. Natural talent is a great substitute for hard work, we often foolishly reason. By the end of the day I'd be racing down the slopes with Alan.

With an hour and a half of lessons and a couple of additional hours of practice under my belt, I felt I was ready for the big time. No sense wasting the afternoon on the gentle slope of Beginners Hill with poor folk who can't stand up. The view from the top of the mountain beckoned.

As I completed a final run down the hill, I stopped to check my wallet. Lack of sufficient funds would be a certain sign of God's restraining hand. A friendly paddle pull operator rushed over as I put my under funded wallet back in my pocket. "Here, I found this unused ticket earlier. If you were thinking of exchanging your lift ticket, use this one...on the house!" (To run from such a clear sign from God would be to participate in the sin of Jonah. I couldn't take the chance.)

I waited for Alan to complete his run. The spare minutes passed by quickly as I contemplated the dream. Some visions are fulfilled so easily...this one certain to be a piece of cake.

On the back of the Ski Patrol

The excitement was short lived. Once on the chair lift, the horror of broken cables and free falling into ten feet of snow filled

my mind. Alan further inspired my fears by quipping, "The only way down now is on the back of the Ski Patrol." I would later recall the comment and entertain it as a live option.

Out of consideration for me, Alan suggested that we head down the Country Road, the easiest of the runs. When I saw that the first slope was steeper than the hill I'd been working on all morning, I decided that an airlift down would be more to my liking. I lost my confidence and concentration. Skills learned and practiced for hours became impossible to implement. Instead of using my skis to slow down or stop, I employed my body as a brake...hurling it into the nearest snowbank. Although it worked very effectively, it lacked the grace I envisioned earlier.

Halfway down, I urged Alan to proceed without me...I would join in the spring! The sense of elation which buoyed me all morning disappeared. Survival was all that mattered, and that seemed in serious jeopardy. The trails were so narrow...the slopes unnervingly steep...the curves much too sharp.

Fear consumed me in what my mind considered a life threatening situation. I regained (or should I say, gained control!) near the bottom. Going back, at least right then...out of the question! The last ounces of my will to conquer were drained from me when a four-year old who had taken lessons with me earlier whizzed by. Recognizing me as a fellow beginner, her proud mother beamed. "She made it all the way to the bottom without falling."

Will I pay the price?

While I didn't learn to ski on March 1, 1985, I discovered something more valuable. It's one thing to dream...plan...even take the first easy steps. But somewhere along the line a tough question demands our attention: "Do I want something badly enough to pay the price?"

Jesus visited Jerusalem for a feast of the Jews. In the city, near the Sheep Gate, was a pool called Bethesda. Underneath the covering which surrounded the body of water, a number of sick people gathered. Some were blind. Others suffered from lameness. Still others experienced paralysis. Tradition had it that an angel of the *Lord* would, on occasion, come down and stir up the water. The first one into the pool after each disturbance would be cured of whatever disease ravaged the individual's body.

As the sick kept their eyes riveted on the water waiting for the slightest hint of activity, Jesus moved through the crowd. He paused beside a man who had been unable to walk for thirty-eight years. "Do you want to be well?"

A strange question for a helpless individual. He wouldn't have been there if he didn't...would he? It proved to be a loaded inquiry from One who searches the inner recesses of our hearts.

"I need someone to help me in the pool. Someone always gets in before I do."

The response had nothing to do with the question. At the heart of Jesus' challenge...His awareness that no matter how miserable we might be, what we are currently experiencing is often preferable to the unknown.

We may envy others for a particular skill they have mastered. We may dream of being as big as the church around the corner. We may wish we, like the lion in *The Wizard of Oz*, possessed the courage to try something new or daring.

Such urges soon pass, victims of a rationale fueled by the knowledge that others are in the same boat. They have survived without the experience...we will too. Our dreams remain locked in our heads, never assuming the concrete form of reality.

Paralyzed by fear, we'd rather stay in the lodge by the fire. It's easier to dream of racing champions than to feel the snow bite into our faces as we cut a sharp corner.

Jesus' question to the man wasn't "Why haven't you been healed before this?" He didn't suggest that better organization would insure healing in the very near future. He asked if the man wanted to walk...NOW!

I don't mean to minimize the problems we face. Neither am I suggesting that just a little effort will make all the difference. I am certain, however, that if we respond faithfully to the call of our Head (the Lord Jesus) we will realize our role in the expansion of His kingdom.

If I never ventured beyond the limits of the Bunny Hill that beautiful spring day, I could have returned home with glowing reports of great success. Frankly, I bombed as a skier on my first trip down the mountain,

Continued on page 11

One in every 200 "Christian workers on the field" may be killed.

330,000 Christians Martyred Every Year

Dan Wooding

A world missions expert has stated that an average of 330,000 Christians a year are martyred for their faith around the world.

Dr. David Barrett, editor of the *World Christian Encyclopedia*, said in an interview with the *Open Doors News Service* from his office in Richmond, Virginia, that he has come up with these provisional figures during a major investigation he is doing on martyrdom in the Church since its inception.

"The twentieth century has seen a rise in Christian martyrdom," said British-born Barrett. "In recent years, the average number of Christians who have been martyred for their faith is 330,000 per year."

Dr. Barrett defined Christian martyrdom as, "a Christian who loses his life for Christ in a situation of witness as a result of human hostility," and a Christian as "anybody who is a believer in Christ."

"A marked man or woman"

Barrett said his investigations have led him to believe that one in every 200 evangelists, pastors, and missionaries are being killed on the mission field and is likely to get "even worse with the passage of time."

"If you are a Christian worker active on the frontiers of evangelism in a non-Christian society, you are a marked man or woman," said Dr. Barrett.

"Some 95 percent of these situations of martyrdom go unreported in the media and therefore unrecorded for posterity, but there have also been some fairly sensational stories that have appeared in the press, and those I have gleaned from interviews, correspondence and other inquiries, as well as from the 1,000 missions magazines today," he said.

When asked where martyrdom was taking place today, he replied, "In recent years we have seen the massacre of the Elim missionaries in Rhodesia, plus many killings in different parts of Latin America in countries like El Salvador, Honduras, and Nicaragua. Several evangelicals in Peru were recently killed."

He cited Uganda as a country that has had a tremendous number of martyrs, especially during the eight years of misrule under Idi Amin from 1971 until 1979. Then, an estimated 500,000 people were slaughtered, many of them Christians.

"Archbishop Janani Luwum was a modern-day martyr," said Barrett. "Although some people say it was a political murder, I believe he was murdered by Idi Amin for standing up to him on a religious principle."

Barrett says that the "most outrageous affair in this century" was the genocide in 1915 of some 700,000 Armenian Christians in Turkey by the Ottoman militias there. "This was the worst, because it was deliberate," he said. "We have records of the soldiers lining up a village and asking the believers, 'Mohammed or Christ?' The Armenians replied individually, 'Christ, only Christ.' Because of this they were either bayoneted or shot. This was the worst of the massacres."

He also cited Stalin's murder of Ukrainian peasants in 1933. "Because they took a religious stance, some ten million were killed," he said.

Barrett said that some 250 Russian Orthodox bishops have been martyred since the 1917 Bolshevik revolution.

"In earlier days, they were machine-gunned, shot individually, or died in prison, but now the killing is more subtle," he declared. "For instance, a bishop will be standing at a bus queue and will be 'accidentally' shoved in front of the bus when it arrives."

"The normal church is the suffering church"

When asked if it would get any better, Barrett replied: "Certainly not, because closed countries are increasing all the time and this is, by and large, a product of the church fighting against the state."

Barrett said that martyrdom has always been a part of the life of the church. "The Apostle Paul said in Colossians 1, verse 24, 'I now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up in my flesh what is lacking in the afflictions of Christ, for the sake of His body, which is the church,' and so if you don't have a history of martyrdom in your church, then that's your loss.

"For people in well-to-do countries like this one (the United

States,) to say, 'How terrible this is,' only goes to show how far they are from the apostolic way of life. The normal church is the suffering church."

Barrett said that in the early days of the church, martyrdom was a form of evangelization. "In the days of the Roman Empire, when a person was publicly martyred, you saw conversions on the spot. This is the normal lot of the church and any attempt to escape it or downplay it would be wrong." □

Dan Wooding is Chief Correspondent for Open Doors News Service. This report courtesy of Open Doors News Service.

Let's Head for Slopes From pg. 9

but without a single regret at having made the effort.

Things may come easier for some ministries than they have for us. But taking up our mats and walking still beats spending the rest of our lives lying on them.

In all likelihood, times of discouragement and frustration lay in our path. The course God sets is seldom free of inconvenience. But before we turn back, we'd do well to ponder Teddy Roosevelt's charge: "Far better it is to dare mighty things, to win glorious triumphs, even though checkered by failure, than to take rank with those spirits who neither enjoy much nor suffer much because they live in the gray twilight that knows neither victory nor defeat."

God calls. Our world waits.

Bundle up. Grab your gear. Catch your breath. Muster up your courage. Let's head for the slopes. I assure you...the view from the top is worth the effort. □

More Troubles for Mexico's Tzotzil Christians

Mexico City, Mexico (ODNS) — A virtual death sentence has been declared against Christians living in the Tzotzil village of San Miguel Mitontic, in Mexico's southernmost state of Chiapas. Issued by the town president, Juan Lopez Vasquez, villagers have been given a free reign to "kill anyone that is found singing or studying the Bible at home," according to informed sources in the region.

According to eyewitness reports, the death threat was issued against a total of 232 believers, including 120 women, 77 men, and 35 children, who were arrested by a mob of more than three hundred people on March 22.

The incident began with the initial arrest of four evangelical Christians who were arrested at their homes and taken to the county jail. Although charges against them were not specified, the four did not resist arrest. Within hours, the village president led a mob of several hundred villagers armed with rifles, pistols and sticks, who sought out and arrested all the evangelicals of the community.

According to an observer, who asked not to be identified, the jail was unable to hold the more than two hundred prisoners that were rounded up, so they were transferred to a warehouse where believers were held for three days without food or water.

On March 26, Pablo Salazar Mediguchia, legal counsel representing the evangelicals was forced to sign an agreement in order to obtain their release which stated that the "prisoners" must cooperate with the "religious" traditions of the town, the proof of which included abandoning any religious belief which does not agree with local traditional religions.

Following their release, one of the believers allegedly reported that the town president "woke us up at sunrise, and took us to a park where he pressured us in front of a multitude of people to abandon our worship of God in the places where we hold our services, and said that it was no longer permitted to gather together in an evangelical church."

For the past twenty-two years, Tzotzil Christians have suffered harassment and persecution, and more than seven thousand people have been expelled from their communities for alleged "religious reasons," according to sources in Chiapas. But believers point to the weakening of local power bases as the main cause for their persecution.

Following the initial conversion of several thousand Tzotzil Indians in 1965, believers dealt a damaging blow to owners of clandestine distilleries by their sudden abstinence from drinking the local "moonshine." Angered by their economic losses, local "landlords" started a campaign against any new conversions which resulted in the mass migration from traditional lands including the village of San Miguel Mitontic, to the village of San Cristobal de las Casas, where believers have since sought refuge. □

From Open Doors News Service

Jesus: The Master Mender

David S. McCarthy

Suppose the Twentieth Century could be marked by a single identifying emblem, what symbol would you choose?

Some of us might cast a vote for the split atom. The dividing of basic particles not only represents mankind's search for alternative energy, but also stands for the multitudes of torn, divided souls who abound throughout the world. As one thoughtful student put it, "I feel like pieces of a lot of people thrown together."

God wants to deal with this mood of disorganization and disrepair. We may see His design more clearly by placing two Bible texts side by side.

The first passage appears in Matthew's Gospel. Jesus has approached Peter and Andrew in Galilee, saying, "Follow me and I will make you fishers of men." They accepted the Master's invitation and approached another pair of brothers, James and John. In Matthew's account, they were *"mending their nets"* (Matthew 4:21) when Jesus challenged them to join His cause.

The second verse comes from a letter Peter wrote to Christians who were being severely tested for their commitment. The ex-fisherman wanted his readers to know that God was for them, so he reached back into his old way of living for a term that would picture the divine action. He selected "mend," the same word used of the nets in the first Gospel.

Unfortunately the King James misses this connection. The translators made the verse read, "The God of all grace...make you perfect" (1 Peter 5:10). However "perfect" in Peter is the "mend" Matthew used to describe what James and John were doing to their faulty nets.

As a fisherman repairs torn nets, so God mends torn lives. What human hands accomplish in the physical realm, God's hand brings to pass in the spiritual. Only He mends shattered lives and restores wholeness to broken personalities. Let's consider several areas where His services are urgently needed.

The Master Mender repairs lives disrupted by sinful habits.

Let Peter himself serve as our example. Writers who typecast Peter in the days when he walked with Jesus depict the fisherman as a youthful, swaggering rascal who scoffed at spiritual matters. He was boistrous and disorderly. Yet behind the loudness Peter seems tortured by despair over his personal defeats. Even today men and women may resort to similar facades to hide their inner brokenness. Tony Ralls was such a person.

Tony grew up near London, England, joined the armed forces while in his teens, and eventually drifted into the drug culture. Once he became addicted, neither hospitals nor national withdrawal clinics could produce a cure. Then Tony met a Christian couple who assured him that Jesus could put a young man's life back together.

At first Tony rejected their message. He cursed and tried to

project a self-sufficient image, yet there was no mistaking his inner confusion. The witnesses persisted. At last Tony admitted to himself that he needed and wanted the Master's services. Ralls reached out and exclaimed, "God, if You are there, please come into my life and make me whole."

The cure didn't happen overnight, but it was real. Tony stumbled back into the drug scene after that prayer, but God was there to pick him up. Within a few weeks, the new Christian realized that pills and needles no longer gave the thrill they once produced, and nothing compared to the joy of living for God. Total withdrawal from drugs was balanced by an increase in Bible study and Christian service. Ralls says, "I am a living testimony to the fact that Christ can heal today."

What evil has smashed your will power and destroyed your dreams? Is it dishonesty? Bitterness? Sexual entanglements? God is still the Master Mender. He stands ready to take your case if you hand it over to Him. He mends whatever is wrong by making you right.

The Master Mender repairs lives that are torn by suffering

When Peter spoke of God mending lives the apostle was writing to people seared in the furnace of affliction. "Suffer" or a related term appears sixteen times in 1 Peter alone.

Suffering reaches God's people at several levels. It may strike us as physical pain, for disease and accidents are terrible realities. Perhaps the worst suffering is emotional. One doesn't carry adult responsibilities for long before learning that where anguish is concerned it isn't a matter of "if," but "when."

What treatment does this Master Mender employ when life swells with trouble? In my own experience there are three stages. Each is important, and if one misses a single step the healing process grinds to a halt.

First, God helps me see that trouble comes to everyone sooner or later. Our plight isn't related to personal goodness or wickedness, but to our common humanity. As members of the race we will all pass through pain and trouble. So when suffering arrives, I must not fight it or blame God for that will only aggravate the grief. Instead I must seek God's help in accepting it.

A young wife and mother was struggling with resentment toward a neighbor who had launched an unfounded rumor campaign. She told several sympathetic friends that she had had no success in overcoming these ill feelings until she knelt before the Lord and told Him she was willing to accept the situation and let Him handle the outcome. Once she took that step, resentment faded and her hurt feelings began to heal. Acceptance is often the first step God asks us to take in order for His healing to become operative in our lives.

Second, affirm that suffering may be useful. Consider how this principle works in society. Polio's crippling effects called worldwide attention to the need for a cure. Millions of dollars and man hours focused on the problem, and the Salk vaccine eventually emerged from the laboratory. Suffering and the death of thousands became a spur that led medical science to find a preventive drug.

Human rights are often won only after minorities feel the lash of persecution. Violent suffering and even martyrdom may be the price of social justice in areas where it is not easily achieved.

The same principle seen in society at large applies to the spread of the gospel. Reporting on the church in China, missionary statesman David Adeney tells of a Chinese Christian whose brother-in-law had long been imprisoned in a labor camp. His zeal for Christ had not been dampened by confinement. When sympathy was expressed for the man's plight, the relative replied, "Do not be sorry; how else could people in the labor camp hear about the Lord Jesus." That is nothing less than the Master Mender at work in His people.

God's reinforcing presence

Third, know that the Lord takes the worst of trouble — where no use for it can be discerned — and there bestows the gift of His reinforcing presence. In the midst of pain, when there seems to be no way out, a believer may claim promises such as:

"Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified because of them, for the Lord your God goes with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you" (Deuteronomy 31:6)

"Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be terrified; do not be

discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go." (Joshua 1:9)

"So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand." (Isaiah 41:10)

Every day God's people prove the practical value of words like these.

Among these who have proven the reality of God's nearness in trouble is Andre Thornton, a successful major league baseball player. More than once Thornton's booming bat led his team in home runs, runs scored, and slugging percentage. He and his wife, Gert, were witnessing Christians who conducted home Bible studies for Andre's teammates.

Shortly after the 1977 season ended, the Thorntons and their two small children drove through western Pennsylvania. Snow was falling and the roads were pocked with patches of ice. Without warning their van struck an ice spot and flipped into a ditch. Gert and a two-year-old daughter were killed instantly. Andre and his four-year-old son escaped with minor injuries.

Thornton grieved, but in his hour of pain he felt God's healing presence. He told a reporter, "You don't realize the strength that God will provide until you go through something like this. I never even thought about being able to go through it before, but after things happen God comes to you in a strong way that lets you know He's there, and gives you the comfort that's needed to carry on."

God is for us as the Master Mender. He repairs lives torn by suffering.

God repairs lives torn by conflict

Most of us have an idea what actions and attitudes are pleasing to God. Unfortunately we fail to turn our knowledge into positive habits and that leads to conflict.

A pastor relates how for many years he fought a losing battle against bitterness. His conflict went back to a winter morning when he was driving the youth group to a conference. As the pastor approached a red light, his car slid on an icy spot and gently locked bumpers with the vehicle in front. The minister was ready to apologize, but the lead driver was irritated. No sooner had the light turned green than the first car took off, dragging the pastor's car behind.

The minister admitted, "I let a root of bitterness get started in my heart that lasted for years. Every time I saw a man who looked like the man who dragged my beautiful car, I literally had the urge to go right up and punch him."

Of course, the pastor knew what the Bible says about holding grudges. He could quote verses about anger and bitterness, yet his life was torn by conflict between the standards he knew to be right and the emotions that struggled to assert themselves.

One day the pastor had an encounter with the Master Mender. The Lord said, "You see what's in your heart don't you? How long are you going to carry around this extra baggage, this garbage you've been tolerating and nurturing in your memory? Why don't you give it to me?"

That's what the pastor did. Twenty-five years later he could still say, "Since then I've not wanted to punch anybody who looked like that man. I can enjoy the victory Christ gave."

The Master Mender has a message for those who know the power of temptation. He says, "Don't try to hold on by your own strength. You can't possibly withstand the enemy alone. Instead, turn your life over to Me."

A Christian woman went to a small group where problems of daily living were being faced in a realistic manner. She heard a speaker and later wrote a letter which said, "Thank you for your remarks about surrendering our "words" to Christ. The word on my paper was "jealousy." I gave it up, and once I surrendered something remarkable happened in my relationship with that other person." The woman was healed at the root of her problem, and the relationship that irritated her was healed, too.

So we return to Peter's encouraging message, "The God of all grace...repair...you." Don't live in discord, let God give you a melody. Don't be a walking civil war, become a civil government under the control of Christ. Don't be a torn soul, be a whole person.

Master Mender, that's what He is, and you may prove it for yourself. □

David McCarthy is the author of several books including A Practical Guide for the Christian Writer *and* Invitation to Discipleship. *He is senior pastor of the Advent Christian Church in Aurora, Illinois.*

A review article

The Abortion Controversy: Developing an Evangelical Consensus

Mark Valcourt

Unless people have buried their heads in sand they are acutely aware of the polemics, rhetoric, passion, and violence that have surfaced in the wake of the 1973 Roe vs. Wade decision legalizing abortion in the United States. A plethora of books, rallies, tracts, organizations, clinics, and counseling centers have swelled the ranks of the two adversaries, "pro-life" and "pro-choice." Their opposition to each other has been sharply defined.

But many take a middle-of-the-road position, including a number of evangelicals.

Paul Fowler author of *Abortion: Toward an Evangelical Consensus* (Multnomah Press, 1986), is convinced that many evangelicals are compromising or ignoring scriptural injunctions to value life as a sacred gift of God.

The impact of secular thinking

Fowler's initial chapter deals with Christian sentiment towards the unborn in past generations. The data points overwhelmingly toward consensus among Hebrews and Christians against abortion. Where has the consensus gone? He answers this question by refering to the liberal social and ideological climate of the 1960s and the forceful entry of relativistic thinking into American life. He sets the course and states the stark reality: Evangelicals disagree on the abortion issue.

In chapter titled "What is a Person?", Fowler highlights the fundamental issue in the abortion debate. There are no shocks as the author surveys the field of secular ethicists and medical personnel. Relativism, arbitrary standards, humanism, and unconstrained "free thinking" abound.

Do evangelicals speak with one voice?

But what if the same vacillation can be detected among evangelicals? What if the band of crusaders whose foundation for life is the Bible do not speak univocally on this issue? What if the non-committed and pro-abortionists in the evangelical camp use arguments that ring with the tenor of secular relativism?

Evangelicals have a problem. Fowler surveys the thinking of many professed evangelicals on the issue of abortion and exposes the secular model that undergirds their rationale. Many readers of this book may be surprised to hear Fowler's contention that some evangelicals favor abortion.

In an attempt to develop a biblical foundation, Fowler includes an extensive survey of scripture addressing life, death, (Advent Christians have room to enter and advance the debate here with our doctrine of man) and the unborn. While the exegesis is brief and sometimes forced, the theology remains basically consistent. The book is worth owning simply for the topical concordance on abortion that the author composes in chapters 4 and 5.

In the final two chapters, the focus turns pointedly toward pro-life evangelicals. In the spirit of Francis Schaeffer, C. Everett Koop and others, Fowler calls for concerted evangelical action.

His assessment of evangelicals and social action is right. Except for a small minority, evangelicals are content to maintain the security of their sequestered lifestyle. With the fervent preaching of activists and the social withdrawal of monks, evangelicals remain a lesson in inconsistency. We need consensus in theory and in social action.

This book will help point the way for those not already immersed in the debate, or for those who are still not convinced that the Bible denounces the devaluation of human life inherent in "pro-choice" ideology.

For those whose library is strong in the area of biomedical ethics, this book will serve more as a synopsis of evangelical thinking rather than one that offers fresh insight. In this, the book draws its merit, as the footnotes are extensive. For those who want a good one-volume overview of the debate and a clear presentation of a biblically derived evangelical posture, this is as good a book as I have read. □

A graduate of Berkshire Christian College, Mark Valcourt is pastor of the Advent Christian Church of the Highlands in LaGrange, Illinois.

Advent Christians: How Healthy Are We?

Melvin W. White

Of late, several folk have asked me, "Is there sufficient reason for the Advent Christian Church to remain a separate denomination?" What has prompted this question? Is it our smallness? Is it that our "distinctives" are not as distinctive anymore? Is it because we see our problems and losses as insurmountable?

Whatever the reason, I suggest that we rephrase the question to one we really *should* be asking, "Is there any reason we should continue to be a part of the body of Christ?"

From this proper perspective we can ask three other questions that will set our thinking in a healthy direction: Are we really hurting? What are the positive healing reactions to our hurt? How can we remain healthy?

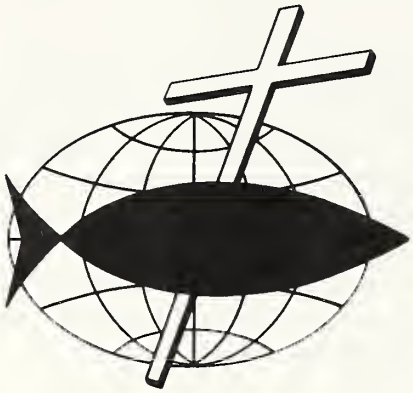
Hurt and healing?

The fact that some have raised the question is evidence that we *are* hurting. That pain is communicated to the rest of the body.

True, we are not large in numbers—yet. Perhaps from that viewpoint we are only a toe! No matter. We hurt. Anyone who has ever broken a toe knows it is no small matter!

Now, how can we positively react to this hurt?

First, we must admit that it exists. We do have problems. Smallness and isolation characterize our denomination's mentality. We do, by our very pain, forget that there is more to the Body of Christ than His toes!



Second, we need to recognize that our pain is not all bad. Leprosy is dangerous to the human body simply because it blocks out pain. A victim's parts can become infected and drop off when no sensation of pain comes to the brain. The Body of Christ has no leprosy! Jesus Christ knows our suffering and He cares!

Third, we must seek professional help. We need to go to our great helper and cry out to him with our hurts — not asking *"why?"* but *"how?"* and *"what?"* He will instruct us. Those instructions will not include amputation because dissected parts never heal.

Large doses of love and forgiveness

Fourth, we must follow His instructions. These will include large doses of love and forgiveness. We need to realize anew how much He loves us — how completely He forgives us. The corollary to these realizations will be a large dose of love and forgiveness for each other.

At the time of my first meeting with the late David duPlessis, I said to him, "I'm so glad to meet you but, perhaps, you will not be so glad when you realize that I hold a rather different doctrinal view from yours." I'll never forget his reply, "That's alright, brother, I forgive you." It was the beginning of a warm and loving relationship.

I wonder if we have forgiven others for holding doctrines different from ours. I wonder if we forgive each other for doctrinal diversities within our own ranks. Let us follow our Head's instructions to love and forgive — really do it!

How to stay healthy

Finally, let's ask how we can remain a healthy toe. It is not good to be healed and then continue the practices that brought on the hurt.

First, we must *love* Jesus Christ supremely. This means spending time in prayer and Bible study — to *delight* ourselves in Him.

Wasn't it a poet who once said to his wife, "I could not love thee half so much if I did not love Him more?" The more we come to love Jesus Christ and realize His love for us, the more we can, and will love each other graciously.

Second, we must *exalt* our Lord. Praise and thanksgiving in our quiet hours as well as corporately will bring joy in heaven and joy in our hearts. It will start the flow of His Spirit to keep us in all our ways growing healthy and strong.

Third, we need to *serve and obey* our Head. We are called to the task to which He was called. That task is getting the message of God's love, forgiveness, and acceptance to all the world. We are his instruments.

We may be a toe but the Body of Christ needs healthy toes with

which to run well the race that will take us to all corners of His world — near and far.

Recently I came across a poem written by Mr. Arthur H. Webb, late, of Danbury, Connecticut. He was, at one time, my father-in-law. I conclude with that poem:

We tell of the peace He hath given
Of the joy that dwells in the heart,
But the joy must be mingled with sorrow
Or we know Him only in part.

Or the joy that was set before Him
He endured the cross with its shame,
Yet His heart was filled with longing
For sinners for whom He came.

Yes, it's grand to live on the mountain
With never a cloud in the sky —
Far above the din and strife below
Where the world in sin goes by.

You may feast on the living Manna
And sing of the joy in your soul,
But to know Him in all His fullness
You must walk in the valley below.

If you long to stay on the mountain
You will find yourself all alone,
For Christ will be in the valley
Calling to sinners — "come home."

So how can we sing of the joy in our soul,
Or tell of His glories abroad;
Until we've found our place in the valley below
Beside the Son of God? □

A graduate of the New England School of Theology, Melvin White pastored several Advent Christian congregations in his over forty years of ministry. He lives in Santa Rosa, California.

School of Evangelism Graduates First Class

Missionaries Hollis, Damon and White are seated in front of Pastors Solomon, Nallathambi, Daniel, Gell Knight and Prabhu Manuel.

Missionaries, graduating students, and over two hundred friends congregated in the Andivilla Prayer House on June 16, 1987. The special event was the first graduation of the School of Evangelism started in Kodaikanal, India on January 31, 1983. Started as an experiment in ministry, the school has proved its value by the three new churches that have been started since its inception.

Principal Marion Damon presents the graduation address.

Pastor Gell Knight receives his diploma after four years of hard study and practical training. Besides the usual biblical studies, classes also included New Testament Greek, prophecy, and seminars in counseling. A seminar in Indian law was conducted by an experienced lawyer, and three seminars in sociology were presented by a trained Indian sociologist. Gell Knight, who received first honors in scholarship during all four years, will be assistant teacher for the new class to begin in September.

Members of the Palani church who attended the graduation of their pastor J. Solomon. Started less than a year ago, the church was recently visited by a band of missionaries from Youth with a Mission. The leader stated, "I have been in 20 countries, but have never seen a program like this, in which the students actually plant new churches under supervision before they graduate."

Please pray for each of these students as they are now planting new churches. Pray for the new students and the missionaries who teach them.

Caroline Michael
Director

Open Doors

Janet Crook

Ring...Ring...This is Janet. May I help you?

That's how it begins. But wait, I'm getting ahead of myself. It all began about three and a half years ago when I realized that I was spending all of my time with Christians. That doesn't sound so bad, and it wasn't. I had spent many hours with Christians who wanted to grow in their faith. The Bible classes I taught were rewarding and satisfying. I learned a lot about my own faith and experienced the joy of teaching others.

Touching lives outside the church

After about ten years of ministry strictly within the church, it was now time to go out into "the world" and touch the lives of those who were hurting. I had no idea how I was going to accomplish this, but David and I began to pray that God would open the door for some type of ministry. I began to apply for jobs for which I felt qualified, but nothing happened.

Finally, feeling confused and disappointed, I stood looking out my living room window and simply said, "Lord, I don't know what You want. I thought I knew, but every door I try to go through closes. I'm going to stop trying so hard. You'll have to open up an opportunity if You want me to do something different." I wasn't upset with God, just not sure what I should do.

A few days later, a friend called and asked if I would consider applying for a position with the agency where she was doing volunteer work. The job was for a person to recruit and train volunteers to work with victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. Of course I told her no! I had never done anything like that and I would be terrified.

Ater a week or so, I received another call. This time it was the program director. She asked me for a resumé, so, what could I say? I had been praying, hadn't I? I had my interview not knowing what the outcome would be, but finding myself riding an emotional roller coaster, one minute scared to death, the next full of excitement and anticipation.

In January 1984, I became the Coordinator of Volunteers for the County Abuse and Rape Emergency (C.A.R.E.) Services. In April of that year I was given the opportunity to become the Director of a Child Abuse Prevention Program. Both of these positions offered extensive training in dealing with survivors of family violence and sexual assault, training that I would not have been able to receive in any other capacity. Finally, in August 1985, I became the Program Director of C.A.R.E. Services.

God can speak to us

What has God been teaching me through all of this? First, that He is capable of speaking to us, even when we aren't sure! He can open any doors, and answer all of our prayers when we desire to be used by Him. He gives us opportunity to grow and learn.

Second, and even more important, I've learned what it is to help people who are hurting and need love, care, and understanding. Most of the women that I have helped have no idea who I am, but they do know that I am there no matter what time of day or night they need me. Comments like "I know you really care" or "there's something so peaceful about you" are common. It is at these times that I know Jesus is able to touch people through me even when there is not an opportunity to say anything about Him. It is amazing to watch the light of the world shine in dark places. And then there are those wonderful times when someone *asks* about faith! Whether through words, a touch, or a smile; there is no joy quite like knowing you've been able to reach someone with God's love.

The third thing I am learning is that I don't know what lies ahead. I am currently the Executive Director of the Sexual Assault Crisis Agency in Long Beach. Right now, I want to learn everything I can. Eventually, I hope to be able to offer training for pastors and lay leaders in our churches who deal with survivors of sexual assault. This horrendous crime will touch one out of three women in the United States. The church is not exempt from the results of family violence and sexual assault. We need training to keep us from further traumatizing these victims.

What has the Lord been teaching me? He's teaching me that whatever opportunity He gives us is exciting and rewarding. There is no limit to the ways He can use us and the doors He can open if we will just go through them. □

Janet is married to David Crook, pastor of the Advent Christian Church in Pasadena, California. They have two adult daughters. They had previous ministries in New England and in Chehalis, Washington. While in Washington, Janet was involved in their church's Bible College in teaching and administration, directed their women's ministries, and provided counseling. Her desire to become involved in family violence counseling and prevention came about through seeing so many hurting and bruised families.

National WHFMS Convention Charleston, WV

Luncheon speaker Barbara Deverick of Lenoir, North Carolina developed the theme, *Sharing the Vision Where You Are*, by giving personal illustrations of opportunities she has had to share her faith. As the Administrative Manager for Blue Ridge Electric Cooperative, Barbara has traveled to many parts of the world. She has found that as one shows love to others, they'll give it back. As "living epistles" we need to practice the presence of God by developing a quiet time and a consistent prayer life. Barbara has found it valuable to memorize Scriptures as she studies the Word. She asserts that it's an exciting ministry to encourage others. She suggested that women let God help set their priorities and be available for Him in whatever He has for them each day.

Melodie Griswold, a graduate student in vocal pedagogy at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, presented a delightful and inspiring mini-concert at the luncheon and served as chorister for group singing at the morning convention. Missionary Margaret Helms from Cebu, Philippines gave a stirring challenge to be evangelistic women during her devotional message. Phrona Underhill of Charleston, West Virginia sang effectively of the need for workers in "His fields."

National President Marian Wrigley presided at the convention and Appalachian Regional President Janet DuBois was the emcee for the luncheon. The regional presidents; Janet DuBois, Carole Lewis, Barbara Schaeffner, Eloise Robertson, and Nancy Winslow highlighted their printed reports. Director of Women's Ministries Caroline Michael highlighted her triennial report, gave an update on our national goals, and reported encouraging progress on the Trained Resource Person program.

Melodie Griswold (standing) sings at the National WHFMS Convention in Charleston, West Virginia.

Some of the over 230 ladies attending the luncheon.

Beatrice Moore of Loudon Ridge, New Hampshire was elected as national WHFMS President for the triennium, Dorothy Randolph of LaGrange, Illinois as Vice-president, and Judy Tidwell of Lenoir, North Carolina as Clerk. Kim Dodd of Charleston, West Virginia chairman of decorations for the luncheon, moderated the drawing for door prizes. These prizes were beautiful Appalachian arts and crafts which had been donated by women of the region. A quilt of exquisite needlepoint squares was presented to retiring national president Marian Wrigley.

Maine Conference WHFMS

Sixteen societies were represented at the annual meeting in Friendship, Maine. Shirley Ross's devotional thoughts encouraged love for one another and Joanne Tompkins sang a special musical number. Missionary Margaret Helms on furlough from Cebu, Philippines challenged the women from several Scriptures to pray that God will call from the local church a tithe for full-time mission service. Nancy Blackstone prayed a dedicatory prayer for the elected officers including: President Joanne Tompkins, Vice-president Shirley Ross, Secretary Rose Gardiner, Treasurer Phyllis Conary, and Auxiliary Superintendent Dawne McGrath. The WHFMS Maine Conference fall luncheon will be held September 12 at Nathaniel's Restaurant, Brewer, Maine.

Mother-Daughter Brunch

This Saturday morning event was a first for one hundred mothers and daughters of the Aurora, Illinois Advent Christian Church. The brunch was planned by Madeline Mead and Nancy Van Meter. The theme was "Patterns for Living" and featured Julie Mead and her "theater troupe." To assure this being a fun-filled event for the ladies, eight of the men served as waiters.

Shelly Warren, National Superintendent
7752 SE Harrison, Milwaukie, OR 97222

Is Discipline a Problem?

Summer is now behind us and I hope that everyone is ready to start back into their fall church schedule. This past summer our church was involved in what we called an Enrichment Club. For six weeks we opened the church one day a week to neighborhood children and had a variety of activities planned. These activities included arts and crafts, puppets, fundamentals of basketball, baseball, and golf, bicycle repair, and fundamentals of babysitting as well as many others. It was a busy summer but the Lord refreshed us and we are looking forward to continuing in His work.

I would like to help you start off your fall schedule on a positive note that will carry through all year. If your children are anything like the birth to 8-year-olds I'm familiar with, you need to establish a set of rules so that your group times can be productive. A chaotic club meeting is not only no fun for you, it is no fun for the club members.

First of all, the leaders of KJ Clubs (or any children's ministry) will need to establish a set of rules if you do not already have one. Be sure to get input from all helpers when compiling your list. Getting your rules down in writing will ensure that everyone knows what behavior to expect. If leaders are unsure and inconsistent in expectations, the children will not know what behavior is expected. If your group already has rules established, be sure to revise them yearly as the age group of your club changes (e.g. 4 and 5-year-olds make a majority compared to a majority of 8-year-olds in previous year).

Here are a few things to keep in mind as you compose your rule list.

1. Make your rules easily understood by the age group with whom you are working. E.G., Rule: One person speaks at a time. If your group is mainly 2-4 year-olds, you will need to gently reinforce this rule with frequent reminders during interruptions.

2. Make sure that the rules you expect to be followed are not beyond the capabilities of the children. E.G., Rule: Everyone puts crafts and art materials away. Some of the younger children may not be able to sort out colored crayons into boxes, so another chore would be more appropriate for them.

3. Include instructions so all the children will understand how they can carry out each rule. Since each child represents a different upbringing, some will already understand how to follow certain rules while others will need your patience and encouragement. E.G., Rule: Do not touch or hit other children. Some children are used to being physical and will need repeated reminders about leaving others alone. They may need instruction on exactly what "do not touch or hit" means.

4. Remember as you create your list of rules to make sure they are enforceable. Young children can be encouraged to follow rules with some positive reinforcement as well as with what Betty Chase calls logical consequences. E.G., Rule: Everyone stays seated at the table while eating and/or drinking. For a child who continuously gets up and walks around eating his crackers, a logical consequence would be to withhold his snack until he stays seated.

5. Finally, remember to keep your list short. Too many rules and you'll go crazy enforcing them and run the risk of being very inconsistent.

I'll be praying that you'll get off to a great start this fall. Working with children is one of the greatest callings one can have in the life of the church. May God richly bless each of you as you guide these precious "jewels." May He sustain you in every way as you serve Him! □

Recognized KJ Clubs
1986

100% Clubs: Banner Chapel, Benson, NC
Berea, Smoaks, SC

95% Clubs: Buckhead, Smoaks, SC
Garner, NC
Mount Pleasant, Clayton, NC

90% Clubs: Bethel, Lenoir, NC
Stone's Creek, Benson, NC
Taylorsville, NC
Windsor, CT

Christmas in October

Christmas in October bulletin inserts give important information about this annual promotion to raise funds for special Christmas gifts to our missionaries and funds for our world missions projects. The bulletin inserts were mailed in late August to each pastor. Please utilize the information on these inserts when you promote Christmas in October in your church.

Your Christmas in October emphasis may be planned for any Sunday in October. We encourage you to use this time to inform your church about Advent Christian world missions and to give some pertinent information about our missionaries. The new missionary profiles in the 1987 program kit are a good resource for factual and personal data and also suggest prayer requests for each career missionary.

One of the actions at our triennial WHFMS Convention was to increase our giving to Christmas in October by ten per cent each year. 1986 was a record year and we're expecting another record for this year. If you need additional information, please write to the Department of World Missions or to the Department of Women's Ministries, P.O. Box 23152, Charlotte, NC 28212.

Recognized Junior Action Clubs 1986

Special Honor
Bangor, ME
Bishopville, SC
Buckhead, Smoaks, SC
Chelsea, ME
Mount Olive, NC
Stone's Creek, Benson, NC
W. Jacksonville, FL

Honor
Beaver Creek, NC
Berea, Smoaks, SC
Clayton, NC
First, Augusta, GA
First, Lenoir, NC
Hartsville, SC
Lone Star, Clifton Forge, VA
Sylvester, MI
Taylorsville, NC

Mission Prayer Partnership

September

19 **Praise** the Lord for our **new mission field in Mexico.** Pray that the Lord would bless these national pastors as they start churches in the Baja Peninsula.

20 **Pray** for **Bryce and Barbara Whiting** and their daughter as they prepare for future mission service in the Philippines.

21 **Pray** for the **Mannivakkam India** church whose building was burned by Hindu extremists. Pray that there will be money raised to rebuild.

22 **Pray** for new Appalachian Superintendent **Hal Vannoy.** Have faith that God will enable him to encourage the pastors and enlarge the churches with spiritually strong, loving members for this important region.

23 **Pray** for **Mrs. Bea Moore,** new WHFMS President. Pray that the wisdom of Christ will continue to dwell richly in her as she carries out her duties.

24 **Pray** for a much needed increase for the Capital Funds Drive to build churches in India.

25 **Pray** for **Austin and Dorothy Warriner** as they continue their evangelistic outreach in Japan.

26 **Pray** for **Floyd and Musa Powers** as they continue to encourage the Japanese churches.

27 **Pray** that the Lord would raise up those who feel a definite call to missionary work in Japan.

28 **Pray** for **Thambusamy and Victoria Devairakkam** as they seek souls in the Kluang area of Malaysia. Pray for **Lucas and Beulah Devasahayam,** of Banting, Malaysia as they show forth God's power to redeem souls.

29 **Pray** for **Beryl Joy Hollis** as she speaks the Word of God, encouraging pastors in the Madras area of India.

30 **Praise** the Lord for **Chaplain Scott Bezanson** for he is increasing the knowledge of God among our servicemen.

October

1 **Pray** that the Lord would mightily supply the financial needs of our denomination at the local, conference, regional, and national level.

2 **Pray** for the important "Christmas in October" giving.

3 **Pray** for **Marion Damon** that the Lord would perfect her work: the construction of a new school of evangelism in India.
4 **Pray** that **Barbara White** will be strengthened as she ministers in Kodaikanal and assists in the school of evangelism.
5 **Pray** for **David Vignali** that the Lord would use him to encourage believers in the Philippines.
6 **Pray** with **Frank and Judy Jewett** as they hear God's voice in leading the San Vincente Fellowship at Cebu.
7 **Praise** God together with **Alice Brown** as she is involved at the growing Oro Bible College.
8 **Pray** for **Margaret Helms** as she meets with the field council for continued evangelism in the Philippines.
9 **Pray** for the Northern Mindanao Philippine Advent Christian Conference that as they delight in the Lord, He will bless their work in the "Mission 2000" program to reach their nation for Christ.
10 **Pray** for Nigerian Superintendent **E.K. Akpan** that God would continue to enlighten his understanding as he guides our churches in Nigeria.
11 **Pray** for **Francis and Lyne Ssebikindu** as they abound in good works in the inner city of Memphis.
12 **Praise** the Lord for your pastor and pray that God will mightily anoint him to continue to lead you to the perfect will of our risen Saviour. Hallelujah!
13 **Pray** for Advent Christian missionary students in whatever college and seminary they are attending.
14 **Praise** the Lord for another successful Penny Crusade.
15 **Pray** that the Lord will call men and women who will obey His voice to serve in full-time Christian ministry for the U.S., Canada, and to the uttermost parts of the earth.
16 **Pray** for our retired missionaries, who so cheerfully have given so many years to good works that they might feel the Lord's presence.
17 **Pray** for the success of the new home mission work in Bloomington, Illinois.
18 **Pray** for Director of World Missions, **Harold Patterson**, as he prepares to go overseas.

Mission Directory

INDIA

Barbara White (January 14)
Box 17, Andivilla
Kodaikanal 624101
INDIA

Beryl Joy Hollis (December 16)
American Advent Mission
Velacheri, Madras 600 042
INDIA

Marion Damon (March 27)
Box 17, Andivilla
Kodaikanal 624101
INDIA

JAPAN

Floyd Powers (October 8)
Musa Powers (February 28)
Rebecca Powers
(November 11, 1971)
18-11-4 Motoyama Kita cho
Higashinada ku, Kobe shi 658
JAPAN

Austin Warriner (January 1)
Dorothy Warriner (January 18)
3-37 Okayama Higashi
5 Chome
Osaka Fu 575
JAPAN

MALAYSIA

Thambusamy Devairakkam
Victoria Devairakkam
Advent Christian Church
3A, Jalan Sayang Housing Trust
86000 Kluang, Johor
MALAYSIA

Lucas Devasahayam
Beulah Devasahayam
Advent Christian Bethel Church
30, Jalan Cempaka
Taman Gembira
42700 Banting, Selangor
MALAYSIA

PHILIPPINES

Frank Jewett (December 1)
Judy Jewett (January 29)
Danny Jewett (June 13, 1976)
Timmy Jewett (June 26, 1978)
Letitia Jewett (April 13, 1980)
P.O. Box 263
Cebu City 6401
PHILIPPINES

Alice Brown (March 24)
Box 223
Cagayan de Oro City 8401
PHILIPPINES

David Vignali (May 10)
P.O. Box 263
Cebu City 6401
PHILIPPINES

Margaret Helms (September 18)
P.O. Box 263
Cebu City 6401
PHILIPPINES

MEMPHIS MISSION

Francis Ssebikindu (May 13)
Lyne Ssebikindu (May 8)
Faith Nancy (September 28, 1982)
Ashley Grace (January 21, 1985)
2590 Faxon Ave.
Memphis, TN 38112

ON LEAVE

Bessie Smith (March 27)
Box 657, Waukewan Street
Meredith, NH 03253

*The missionaries' birthdates follow their names.

Truth and Consequences

Jonathan Edward's legendary sermon, "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God," was not spoken with fiery passion. Edwards stood motionless as he read his sermon in a monotone from a thick manuscript. But his words electrified his Connecticut congregation—women screamed aloud; grown men cowered in their pews.

Convicted, Edwards's listeners repented. Revival spilled through the New England valleys into all of the colonies. Fear of ultimate consequences—the judgment of God—led thousands to holy living.

But in the 20th century, notions like the "wrath of God" have been dismissed as the product of Puritan prudery. Right and wrong are no longer moral absolutes to live by, but psychological hang-ups to be healed.

Modern relativism thus ushered in the glorious new age of freedom. Consider how a popular women's magazine has described it:

"Modern technology (and the law of the land) ...churned out a few things...The Pill...You could have sex with an entire army and nothing would happen...legalized abortion. No one on earth ever loved having an abortion, but if there was a slip-up...you could do something about it and not be accused of a crime. And so we were free!"

And there was little concern for the *ultimate* consequences of what used to be known as sin in Edwards's day. By the '60s and '70s the concept of God's judgment was rendered impotent. God was as relative as moral standards—He was dead, perhaps; or too all-loving to punish; or whatever we conceived Him to be. At any rate, He was irrelevant to morality, and that meant fornication, adultery, perversion, and all those other old-fashioned words became rights instead of wrongs.

But in the mid-80s, the freedom of the '60s and '70s seems to have soured. "The evidence is accumulating that we have passed through an Age of Liberation and are now in an Age of Restraint," editorializes Michael Barone in *The Washington Post*. "Statistics on sexual behavior, consumption habits, and social behavior all show this trend."

Barone's evidence: the steady increase of female teenage premarital intercourse has leveled off; syphilis is down from peaks of a few years ago; the number of abortions has dropped; liquor, wine, and beer sales are slipping; though marijuana statistics aren't reliable, there are indications that use is declining.

Right and wrong are no longer moral absolutes to live by, but psychological hang-ups to be healed.

A "new" morality?

Why these sudden changes in lifestyle? Is there a new morality sweeping America, as in Edwards's time?

Cosmospolitan, the glossy women's magazine that elevated hedonism to new heights in the mid-'60s, offers one explanation. A recent article titled, "The New Chastity," cites the young woman who confesses she has slept with only one man. Why? Because the girl explains matter-of-factly, "I don't want to die."

Her fear is not unfounded. Authorities at the Center for Disease Control estimate that in the United States, there are between five hundred thousand and one million carriers—both men and women—of AIDS.

Thus the editor of the *Journal of the American Medical Association* wrote recently, "It may behoove those people who do not wish to get AIDS to adjust their lifestyles...This is a great time to practice sexual monogamy."

The possible slowing down of the sexual revolution is good news. But there is painful irony in the fact that it took AIDS to accomplish what no amount of pulpit pounding could do: People have a greater fear of disease than of God's judgment!

Such a low view of God in our supposedly Christian culture raises troubling questions for Christians. Is our view of God any higher? Where are we failing in presenting our message?

To be sure, we rant against immorality. But usually we lay the blame on the "permissive society" or on liberal legislation. And so we seek political solutions for our moral failures, rather than focusing on individual sin and warning of the consequences of incurring the wrath of a just and holy God.

And when we do preach about consequences, they aren't the *ultimate* judgments of a righteous God that Edwards preached about. No, the slickly marketed '80s gospel, shaped by the immediacy of television, is a message of *immediate* consequences—the health, wealth, and business success that come to all who believe.

But if we preach only this gospel of temporal blessings, we are just like the pagan who alters his behavior because of immediate consequences rather than an ultimate fear of God.

In a time such as this, be it an age of liberation or an age of restraint for the wrong reasons, we dare not water down the power of the real Christian message. People are dying to know it. □

from Jubliee *©1986 by Prison Fellowship*

GOOD GIVING

This seal is our pledge that your gifts are used as you planned.

As a member of the Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability (ECFA), we follow high standards for fundraising . . . standards that help set us apart from other ministries.

ECFA is an alliance of more than 300 evangelical ministries dedicated to honest accounting, financial integrity, and good stewardship.

Thank you for your support of

Advent Christian General Conference

To learn more about ECFA, write:

Arthur C. Borden, President, Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability, P.O. Box 17511, Washington, DC 20041-0511, (703) 938-6006.

AC04343
University of North Carolina
Serials Dept Davis Library
080 A
Chapel Hill, NC 27514

C286.7 / A24

Advent Christian WITNESS

October 1987

Making Friends for Jesus

evangelism and church planting touch people with the Gospel

Member
epa
Evangelical Press Association

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
Robert J. Mayer

MISSIONS
Harold Patterson

WHFMS
Caroline M. Michael

GRAPHIC ARTS
Linda Perault

TYPESETTING
Susan Gettis

EFMA
MEMBER MISSION

EVANGELICAL COUNCIL FOR FINANCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY
ECFA
MEMBER
The symbol of trust

Advent Christian Witness (ISSN 0741-4307) is published monthly except for a combined July-August issue, 11 times a year, by the Advent Christian General Conference of America, 14601 Albemarle Road, P.O. Box 23152, Charlotte, NC 28212. Postmaster: Send address changes to *Advent Christian Witness*, P.O. Box 23152, Charlotte, NC.

Policy: As the official publication of the Advent Christian General Conference of America, the *Advent Christian Witness* publishes the teachings of the Advent Christian Church and promotes the task of evangelism both in North America and throughout the world.

Rates in the U.S. and Canada: one year, $11.00. Single Copy, $1.00. Overseas one year, $14.00.

All articles and materials are copyright ©1987 by the Advent Christian General Conference unless otherwise indicated. Permission to reprint available upon request. The views expressed in this magazine are those of the author and may not necessarily reflect those of the editor or the Advent Christian General Conference.

from the editor

330,000 Christians Killed Each Year

Last month, the *Advent Christian Witness* featured a disturbing report. According to Dr. David Barrett, editor of the *World Christian Encyclopedia*, "The twentieth century has seen a rise in Christian martyrdom. In recent years, the average number of Christians who have been martyred for their faith is 330,000 each year."

This morning, while I was in downtown Charlotte, the force of Dr. Barrett's words struck me. Consider this. If tomorrow, terrorists exploded an atom bomb in Charlotte, a crisis of world proportions would erupt, the news media would cover the story for months on end, and about 330,000 people would be killed.

Martyrdom for Christ does not make for good press. And if we're honest, most of us in the United States and Canada who claim to be Christ's followers, have a difficult time comprehending active persecution of Christians in other parts of the world.

It's time for us to face reality. In regards to persecution and martyrdom, the twentieth century has been the most bloody in Christian history. Even by conservative estimates, in our century over 14 million Christians have been killed because of their faith. In Islamic and Marxist nations, Christians practice their faith at great peril.

Even Advent Christians overseas have experienced persecution. The Manivakkam, India Advent Christian Church building was burned by Hindu extremists. A Filipino Advent Christian pastor was forced into hiding by Marxist guerillas. Two other countries where Advent Christians have missions work, Nigeria and Mexico, are nations where oppositions to the Christian faith has resulted in martyrdom.

Let's express our Christian concern for our brothers and sisters facing persecution in at least two ways. First, we can pray for them. We can ask God to give missionaries and national workers boldness in communicating the Gospel of Christ. Let's also ask Him to provide believers who face oppression with the extra measure of strength needed to do God's will.

Along with prayer, Christians in the United States and Canada can write letters to government leaders and representatives of foreign governments involved asking that Christians be allowed to practice their faith freely and openly. We have learned in the last fifteen years that when attention is called to human rights abuses such as persecution, conditions for oppressed believers tend to improve. In other words, the more letters you and I write, the better the climate for Christians in countries where persecution is a possibility.

For nearly two-thirds of Christians living today, persecution and martyrdom are real possibilities. You won't hear about it on CBS, ABC, or NBC because they could care less. But we can support our brothers and sisters in Christ through our prayers and actions on their behalf. □

Volume 35 Number 9

Advent Christian WITNESS

October 1987

FEATURES

God's Business is Changing Lives 4
An interview with Randall and Donna DeTrude who discuss their call to ministry through church planting.

Proclaiming Christ's Return W. James Smith 8
There was a day when Advent Christians believed the world was in crisis. Is there any less a crisis today?

Peter's Brother G. Roger Schoenhals 10
Andrew wasn't always in the spotlight. But he was effective in service for Jesus Christ. His example shows us that we don't always have to be up front to be effective.

The Most Forgotten Word in Christianity Harold Patterson 12
The Scripture clearly teaches that men and women are lost apart from Jesus Christ. Are we forgetting the importance of that Biblical truth?

Accommodation, Accommodation Freeman Barton 16
From an Advent Christian perspective Dr. Barton surveys three important new books about evangelical Christianity.

ON THE COVER

God loves people! He wants them to know Jesus Christ and receive eternal salvation. Christ commands his church to "make disciples" by communicating his message of love to people around us.

photo by Jim Whitmer

DEPARTMENTS

Editorial 2

Women's Ministries 18

Prayer Partnership 21

Opinion 23

Directory Back Cover

An interview with Randall and Donna DeTrude

GOD'S BUSINESS IS CHANGING LIVES

Berwick Bible Fellowship

Three years ago, God impressed several Advent Christians with the need of a new congregation in Berwick, Maine. In that three years the Berwick Bible Fellowship has seen many come to Jesus Christ. The congregation now numbers well over 100 people and the staff has expanded to include Senior Pastor Roy Ames and Associate Pastor Randall DeTrude.

Randy and Donna DeTrude have an exciting story to share of how God led them first into a relationship with Jesus Christ and then into ministry with the Berwick congregation. The *Advent Christian Witness* interviewed them at the General Conference meetings in Charleston, West Virginia.

Randy, how did you meet Christ as your Savior and Lord?

There's quite a history to my coming to Christ. Let me describe it in a nutshell for you. I've been in church since I was three years old. The church I grew up in did not emphasize a personal relationship with Christ

or the atonement aspect of Christ's work. Because it didn't mean anything to me, as soon as I got into my teen years I elected to move out of the church.

During this same period of time, I spent several summers on vacation with my grandparents in Vermont. My grandmother graduated from Gordon College (formerly Boston Theological Institute) in 1922. She also worked with the Vermont Association of Churches. During summers with her, I spent a great deal of time in Vacation Bible School. Through this time I'm sure the Lord planted his seeds in my life because about five years ago I began a heavy search for God.

I was at a low point in my personal and family life. Once again my grandmother was instrumental. I went to her in the midst of my turmoil and said, "Now I need the truth." And she simply held up God's word and said, "Here is the truth." I gave her the typical, non-believer's response. "I don't need that." She responded, 'You want the truth? You came to me and asked me for it. Here is where it resides."

I remember that as a turning point in my life. I had something to grab ahold of. I returned to a more active role in my family and decided I would take them to church. Because I was still an agnostic, they needed to hear about God from somebody other than me.

One Sunday morning, while attending the Advent Christian Church, Northwood, N.H., Pastor Carl Rundgren declared, "If you feel that you have committed the unpardonable sin, then you haven't." From my previous church experience, I had understood that if I had

committed a large number of transgressions and if I had broken the Ten Commandments, then I was damned for all eternity and had no chance to be with the Lord.

After the service, I conversed with him. He gave me some Scripture to look at. Within the next six months I knew that I could not change my life. Only Christ could do that. I sat down one afternoon alone and invited Jesus Christ into my life as my personal Lord and Savior.

Donna, let me ask you the same question. Could you share with our readers your Christian experience?

I attended the same church that Randy did as a youngster. I took part in the choir and, like Randy, did not hear the idea of having Jesus as your personal Savior. When I was thirteen I went to a winter retreat in New York with some friends who were Baptist and Catholic. At that time I did accept the Lord all by myself understanding at that time what it meant. When I came home I was not discipled and from that point my life just went along day to day. When I faced difficulties and uncertainties I knew where to turn but I didn't know how to reach out to the Lord.

It was through the ministry at the Northwood Advent Christian Church that God worked in my life. We began attending as a family. The church hosted a concert by the *Christian Sons* and that night I accepted Christ as my Savior. My life began to change and the turmoil in our family and in my personal life began to change.

This was just prior to Randy's conversion. At first, I didn't tell him what happened; I kept it to myself. I tried to live my faith and be strong in my Christian life. The Lord gave me strength. I turned to him even more and knowing where that strength came from made it so much more powerful in my life. I knew everything was going to be okay.

Randy, after God called you to be His son through Jesus Christ, you began to sense His leading you into ministry. How did God lead you into a church planting ministry?

The increase in my walk with the Lord, his call upon my life, and His leading me towards ministry has been simultaneous and continuous from the moment that I came to Christ. I had a burning desire to let people know the good news. Conversations with people, whom I wouldn't even think of talking with about religion, were producing interest in the Gospel. I'd be talking about fixing a transmission for instance and the next thing I knew we were talking about Jesus Christ.

I couldn't tell you where those conversations shifted gears. As I thought about this, I came before the Lord and asked, "Lord, is this what you want me involved in? Do you want me to be specifically involved on the cutting edge of evangelism? Are you gifting me with this?" My understanding of spiritual gifts was limited. I didn't have a deep theological understanding of how the Holy Spirit works, but nonetheless I asked Him if this is where He wanted me to be.

He taught me personally and revealed to me a specific book, chapter, and verse from the Scriptures. He answered my prayer to Him, "Do you want me to be involved in evangelism?" by leading me to a passage in His Word. I read that passage and the answer to my question was a specific, "Yes, I want you involved in evangelism." I then asked him, "Do you want me involved on a regular basis, part-time, or full-time?" Again I came to the Lord and specifically asked Him for direction and guidance.

At that time I didn't have much Bible knowledge. In fact, I couldn't have told you where John 3:16 was. But He led me again to a specific book, chapter, and verse. The Lord affirmed that He had His hand on me, that I was doing as He had commanded and that He would lead me. He asked to be patient and it was graphic in my mind.

As time passed, I was getting more excited. I came to Him again and asked, "Lord, I feel like I should go out. I am living in the house that I want on the property that I want. I have all the material things around me. Lord, my earnest desire is to give them up to go where you want me to go. Is this what you are calling us to do? Is this real or am I trying to look proud before you?"

Once again I prayed a specific prayer and He gave me a specific chapter and verse. The Lord was saying to me, "Many have come, followed me, and given up

much, but I have returned even more to them." I wasn't looking for any return on my investment. I simply wanted to make sure pride wasn't getting in the way.

How did you become a part of the Berwick, Maine Bible Fellowship?

In relation to church planting ministry, one afternoon I spread out all the materials I had relating to education and church planting ministry. Information from Gordon-Conwell Divinity School and Luther Rice Seminary sat before me. I was at a fork in the road. I prayed, "Lord," "You have led me before through your Word, please lead me again. I need direction so that I know where you want me to serve you." He directed me to Acts 1:7-12. There you find that when you come to Christ, He gives you power to be His witness in Jerusalem, Samaria, Judea and in all the world. "Lord," I responded, "You are not leading me to pastor in one place for a long time. You're directing me to go out and be involved in different works."

I continued to wait upon the Lord for direction. At Eastern Regional Conference, I met Roy Ames, church planter for the Berwick Maine Bible Fellowship, and through many circumstances, God showed us His leading to be involved with the Berwick Bible Fellowship. The fellowship needed a part-time staff person to assist Pastor Ames and eventually they asked me to fill that position. We have grown since that time to the point where the Fellowship now needs a full-time person. The people have decided that they would like to bring me on full time to service them in that work.

Donna, I can imagine the scene when Randy had all this information spread out on your living room table. What was your first reaction when he told you he felt God calling him to some kind of ministry? How did you respond to that?

I responded positively and experienced God's peace within me. Now I sensed the direction that our lives were going was in the church. I knew it was right, God was in control. For the first time in our lives as husband and wife, God was in control. He's the center of our relationship, and because of that I was able to trust what my husband as the head of the family was doing. I felt comfortable in supporting whatever direction he would go knowing that he would talk to God first. I knew God would tell him where to go so my impression was positive and exciting.

The knights of Pythias hall where the Berwick Bible Fellowship meets.

We have two fifteen-year old boys, Jeffrey and Jeremy. We were concerned because they were at that age where the thought of leaving home and going elsewhere would not be comfortable. But where God led us at this time was not far away from home. We're at a place where we could travel a distance yet still allow them to get through high school where they are. That was comfortable, too, knowing that He was looking out for us in all ways.

Randy, how did the Berwick Advent Christian Mission begin?

Roy Ames was burdened with planting a new church. As he came before God in prayer, the Lord impressed the town of Berwick on Roy's heart. He submitted his ideas to the Emmanuel Advent Christian Church in Rochester, New Hampshire. They agreed to support Roy and he set out to establish this new work. There were nine in the nucleus of people that the Lord brought together to begin the Berwick Mission there. At the outset Roy recounts times of preaching to his mother, his wife, and the few others in the nucleus group.

They sought the Lord's direction to reach out into the community. A couple of contacts were made as individuals came to fellowship with them. They were great prayer warriors. God directed them to list specifically individuals and families. During their prayer time they brought these people directly before the Lord. The bulk of the Berwick congregation at the outset was prayed into that work.

There were a number of large extended families once one family member joined other families who were part of the larger extended family joined one by one. As the congregation prayed for these individuals, they saw several make commitments to the Lord. They also saw those who had not made

commitments in the past accept Christ as Lord and Savior for the first time.

People caught the vision and continued to put down names of their close relatives or community friends. The congregation prayed for these individuals specifically and saw many of them come into the fellowship. We continue that prayer ministry.

I did not join staff until February 1985. Again, I came on part-time to coordinate ministry efforts primarily in home Bible studies and visitation. These Bible studies became small share groups where people could interact in a more comfortable atmosphere outside of the church. Out of those Bible studies we continue to see the church increase.

I feel the Lord has blessed me with the opportunity now to work full-time with the congregation in visitation and ministry coordination. We're growing in many different directions all at once. We are like a new calf trying to stand and we're praying for God's wisdom and blessing upon us.

In your opinion, how important is it for Advent Christians to plant new churches?

It's important to search out areas where we can plant new churches. I don't know of any community where the Lord does not want a church, and when I talk about church, I mean a work that actively preaches the gospel; where people are loving others inside and outside the fellowship, and not merely giving lip service to the cause of Christ. It is one thing to go to someone who is down and outcast

Continued on page 14

The Care and Feeding of Visitors

Clayton Blackstone

Some of us are daring travelers. We think nothing of heading down a road, unmarked on the map...of venturing into the streets of large, unfamiliar cities...of visiting a new vacation spot each year. Others of us prefer the safe and predictable. We stick to the Interstates...stay clear of city traffic...opt for the same old spot every year for our sabbatical from work.

Some of us crave adventure, excitement, change, and challenge. Others choose the predictable, the old workhorse, the tried and true. I sample a new flavor each time I visit Baskin-Robbins, yet I have friends who consider anyone who experiments with Pumpkin Pie ice cream when there's vanilla has a screw loose somewhere. Truth is, on the Risk Taking scale, we've all got a different comfort zone.

Whether you've realized it or not, each person who visits our church takes a risk. They know few people. The environment is new. The worship order unfamiliar. The choruses and hymns alien. The pastor's style one they are unaccustomed to.

I've thought a great deal about "the care and feeding of visitors." The increase influx of the "risk takers" in our congregation has encouraged me to move past the theory. Some of you have also asked what you can do to make these friends comfortable and anxious to return. Here are some ideas. I offer them to you not as the last word in Visitor Care, but as catalysts to accelerate our quest for excellence in this area of our ministry.

1) Introduce yourself to at least one new person each week. Make sure that you seek that person out and speak to them by name the next time that they worship with us. (You might keep a sheet of paper in your Bible just to write the names down to help you remember.)

2) If a visitor appears to be sitting alone, ask if you might sit with them. (You can then introduce them to others during the "Greeting One Another" portion of worship, assist them in keeping pace with the worship order, and see that they follow your example in signing the Silent Roll Call. You should complete the address section as well to set the example for them.)

3) Send a "thank-you" encouragement card to the new person(s) that you met during the service. (Their name and address will be available from the Silent Roll Call.)

4) Stop by the home of a visitor on your way home from church to thank them for joining us for worship. (Don't make it a visit — it's just a quick stop!)

5) If someone has visited for two or three Sundays, invite them to have dinner with you on the next Lord's Day. (You might invite another family or individual from the church to join you so that they will get to know more than one of our "family".

6) Keep up an attitude of warmth, humor, and friendliness.

The Lord of the church offers Himself to fill the void in people's lives. When we respond warmly to the "Risk Takers" who grace us with their presence, we make it easier for His invitation to be heard and received. □

The importance of preaching Christ's return to Advent Christian church growth

Proclaiming Christ's Return

W. James Smith

Good News. I love to share good news because people like to hear it. We like those who bring us good news. So I suppose I like to be the bearer of good news, because I like to be liked.

On the other hand, what if the news we bear is not so good, but we feel compelled to share it? Needless to say this is not so comfortable. As a regional superintendent, committed to making a difference in the kingdom of God through the Advent Christian Church, I cannot run from nor ignore what's happening. Therefore, I must face facts for what they are.

The facts about American churches

From the Institute of American Church Growth we are informed that not one country in the world has the involvement in Christian things of ten years ago. America today is the sixth largest mission field in the world. We are preceded only by Russia, China, India, Indonesia, and Brazil.

169 million people in the United States and another 10 million in Canada are not touched by the saving gospel of Jesus. Between 80% and 85% of *all* churches in America are either plateaued or declining.

In 1900 there were 27 churches for every 10,000 Americans. In 1985 there were only 12 churches for every 10,000 Americans. Edward Dayton reports in *Unreached People* that churches in America are losing nearly 3 million members each year to nominalism or unbelief. Between 3500 and 4000 churches die every year.

Methodist Bishop Richard Wilkie in his new book *And Are We Yet Alive* said to those of us who attended a denominational executives briefing in Pasadena, California, "The Methodist Church has been and is losing 1,000 members each week."

Joe R. Stacker, Southern Baptist Director of Church Administration, writes in *Church Administration* magazine that he discovered the Southern Baptist Church in 1939 with but 4½ million people produced nearly as many converts as in 1985 with a membership of 14½ million.

Does the Advent Christian Church fare better?

These statistics may seem some removed from us. Lest we might think we have been insulated from these trends, view with me the growth figures for the Advent Christian Church. We have averaged 1% loss each year over the past seven years. Put this alongside the giant denominations I have just mentioned and we fare no better.

We see a 9% decrease or loss in both members and attendance in 1985 alone. Membership was 20,394 while reported average attendance was 19,287. Baptisms were 624 down 14% while additions were 1,096 down 42% from the year before. It is only when we average attendance over the past ten years that the figures are less threatening. But, when I was in the pastorate, I felt more effective in ministry when I measured the strength of my church by last Sunday's attendance.

I'm reminded of a television program a few years ago where a Christian told an agnostic the answer was Jesus. "That may be the answer," replied the agnostic,

"but what is the problem?" Should we not know there is a problem we would not seek an answer.

A battle for our minds

These trends I have reported to you turn our thoughts to a question Jesus asked in Luke 18:8, "When the Son of man comes, will He find faith on earth?" What I am suggesting is this, what we are experiencing in the Advent Christian Church today is not uncommon in America and all over the world! Because we are small we feel it more.

What we face is a cultural trend taking its toll on the Christian church. The world is influencing the value system of the church. There is a battle for our minds and the world is winning! Who can really say they have not been affected? I can't. Can you?

There are many things I wonder about. Even though I have heard the warning of the soon coming of Christ all my life, I wonder if we are not in fact living in the last days. If a thousand years is as one day to the Lord, have we not lived about six days? Even though I have been told that most of the signs of Jesus coming have been recognized in nearly every generation, I wonder if the Jews having self government for the first time since the conquest by Babylon and their first home and since 70 A.D. is significant to the last days. This is unique only to this generation. Another uniqueness is that for the first time in the history of the world, man has the ability to destroy himself not once but many times over.

The days of Lot

When Jesus was asked in the seventeenth chapter of Luke when the kingdom of God was coming, He gave several signs. One such description in the 29th verse is, "As it was in the days of Lot..." He tells us there is a parallel with the time of Lot and the time when Christ will come to establish his eternal kingdom.

Consider that for a moment. How was it in the days of Lot? Lured by the ways of the world, we are told in Genesis 13:13, "Lot pitched his tent toward Sodom."

Sodom was a wicked city. So wicked that not ten righteous people could be found living there. When the two angels went to Lot's house, men of the city came and wanted to gratify their unnatural lust. Lot, horrified at the mere thought of such a breach of hospitality, goes so far as to offer to deliver his daughters to them—an offer which was angrily refused. Lot found himself in the unfortunate position of having to choose between what he considered as the least of two evils. Without question we see here the open practice of homosexuality.

There was a day when Advent Christians believed the world was in crisis. Is there any less a crisis today?

And again I wonder. If the leaves are beginning to come out on the fig tree, does that mean that summer is near? (Luke 21:29-33)

What should we do today?

If you wonder with me, what should we do? Perhaps we should note our own involvement in the Advent Christian Church? There are three types of ministers: Those who can take nothing and make something out of it; those who can take something and give it structure; and those who can take a structure and maintain it.

Most evangelical colleges and seminars that have trained pastors for the past thirty years, have been turning out those who fit the third description—those who can take a structure and maintain it. If it takes a person who can make something out of nothing to begin new churches, we have an answer as to why many denominations are seeking desperately for this type of leadership.

A Gallup poll revealed of 200 seminaries studied, 190 did not require a single course in evangelism. Growing denominations require pastors to attend courses in evangelism and church growth.

If there's one complaint I hear more than any other from pastors I serve, it's a frustration over the lack of commitment of people. Most people in today's world demonstrate great reluctance to make any kind of commitment. Is this why the family is in such stress? Is this why children are living in fear of their parents each going a different direction? Check any classroom, and the number of students liv-

Cont. on page 14

My sister preceded me in school. She was an "A" student and a talented musician. When I began a class in grade school, high school, or college, the teacher would often say, "Oh yes, you're Stephanie's brother. She was a good student. I enjoyed having her in class." From then on, it was Stephanie this, Stephanie that.

For years I lived in her shadow. My grades were not up to her level and my musical abilities fell short. Compared to her, I felt inferior.

I wonder whether Andrew, Peter's brother, ever felt that way. How did he handle living in the shadow of the Big Fisherman? Did he ever tire of playing "second fiddle?"

Simon Peter dominates many of the New Testament narratives. We see him as a take charge person who commanded attention. He was a rugged outdoorsman. He was adventurous, articulate, forthright. He was a "ball of fire." He was also thick-headed and impetuous.

Andrew's image is much softer. Instead of a limelight Christian he lived in the background. He let Peter have center stage.

When you're tired of playing second fiddle, consider...

Peter's Brother

Andrew in the New Testament

Andrew's name appears thirteen times in the New Testament. Six of these times he is identified as Peter's brother. Five times more he is either named in the same verse as Peter or immediately following.

The only time Andrew appears without reference to his brother is in John 12:22 where he and Philip approach Jesus regarding some Gentiles. There his name appears twice.

Though Andrew was one of the twelve disciples, his name appears *after* Peter's name in the four places where the list of disciples is given. Mark's gospel is thought by scholars to reflect Peter's direct influence. It's interesting to note that when Mark lists the twelve disciples (3:13-16), as well as a shorter list of four in 13:3, he places Andrew fourth, after Peter, James, and John.

Peter, James, and John have New Testament books bearing their name. Not Andrew. Peter, James, and John are mentioned in Acts after Pentecost. Not Andrew. The Apostle Paul mentions both Peter and John. But not Andrew.

The advantages of playing "second fiddle"

Many people today live in the shadow of someone. Maybe it's a father or a brother or a long-time friend. Maybe the person is better looking, better coordinated, more talented. Maybe it's someone who's smarter, richer, stronger, sharper.

Perhaps you've compared yourself with someone and come up short. You feel inadequate and inferior. Maybe even jealous.

Andrew can help us. When we look in the Bible we find that this "second fiddle" escaped negative attitudes. We find no trace of inferiority, jealousy, or bitterness. There's no hint of the kind of thing that infected the life of Judas Iscariot.

Instead, we find Andrew's life characterized by a consistent, though quiet,

devotion to Christ. He apparently was willing to be his own man, even though he lived in the shadow of a buoyant brother. He was content.

From the glimpses we get, Andrew's devotion to Christ seems to have worked itself out in one dominant way. Perhaps this is the reason Jesus selected him to be among the Twelve. He had a ministry of personal evangelism—Andrew brought others to Jesus.

Andrew the evangelist

Andrew is the first disciple named in John's gospel. And the first thing we discover about him is his readiness to believe. He quickly discerned the true identity of Jesus and he immediately put that belief into action. He hurriedly sought out his brother, told him the good news, and brought him to the Messiah. (See John 1:40-42.)

Not only did Andrew reach out to his own family with the good news of Christ, he directed his attention to children. Consider the feeding of the 5,000 (John 6:5-13). When the other disciples stood dumbly before the impossibility of feeding so many people, Andrew found a little boy with a lunch and brought him to Jesus. Though his own faith staggered in the process, he still came forward with at least a potential solution.

Sometimes "second fiddles" take out their frustrations on those below them. Weak people attempt to lift themselves by stepping on others. They seek to gain prominence at someone else's expense. Thus, we might expect someone like Andrew to be extra tough on kids. Instead, we find a man leading a child to Jesus.

Later in John's Gospel Andrew is at it again. This time the account involves some Greeks (John 12:20-22). The foreigners first approached Philip with the request, "Sir, we would like to see Jesus." He, in turn, took the matter to Andrew.

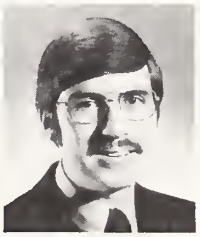
Like any proud Jew of that day, Andrew could have easily dismissed the request and told the Greeks to "get lost." He could have allowed prejudice to dictate his response. But, instead, he brought the request to Jesus. Perhaps the Master would want to talk with these Gentiles.

Because of this incident with the Greeks, Andrew has been noted as the first foreign missionary of the Church. He is also labeled the first home missionary because of his efforts in bringing his brother to Jesus.

We may not be flashy and famous like Peter. We may not be a mighty leader like Paul. We may fall well short of the likes of James and John. We may live in the shadow of a ten-talent Christian.

But one thing we can do: we can all bring others to Jesus. Like Andrew, we can look beyond our limitations. We can find contentment in Christ. We can move about and see the possibilities in family members, children, and those who are "different." And we can introduce these people to the Lord.

Playing "second fiddle" is not all that bad. In fact, it can be wonderful — especially when the conductor is Jesus. □



Freelance writer Roger Schoenhals lives in Seattle, Washington.

The Most Forgotten Word in Christianity

Harold Patterson

Have you noticed some words in our language when repeated convey a most distinctive meaning. For example, say out loud, slowly the word "lost" three times. This word trails off as if there were no boundaries to it. It's a picture of a swamp of despair.

Have you ever experienced being "lost?" You empty feelings inside not knowing which way to turn to find your way back or out of the dilemma that you are in. You might see this feeling even more in the tear streaked face of a child screaming or sobbing because she is separated from her parents in a shopping mall. Alone and lost! What an awful feeling!

A Biblical word

"Lost" is also a biblical word. Jesus used it ten times in the Gospels. In nine of those instances, he referred to those who were apart from God. The words in Scripture that are translated "lost" in English convey an even more dreadful meaning in the original text. "Lost" in the Bible refers to grave peril, irreversible ruin, perishing, destruction, and a dreadful apartness from God.

Paul amplified this meaning describing those without Christ as "being aliens from the Commonwealth of Israel, strangers from the covenant of promise, having no hope and without God in this world." Those without Christ are lost, lost to God, lost to the purpose and promises of God, lost to an enduring fellowship with others, and lost to a glorious hope.

Are all men lost? This question has been debated many times in preceeding centuries and again is hotly contested in these days. Disturbingly in a recent poll conducted by TEAM missions taken of five thousand young people, of the ninety-five percent who consider themselves orthodox in Christian convictions, only 37% believe that people who fail to accept Jesus Christ would be lost. In other words, almost two-thirds of them believe there is some other way to be saved apart from the gospel of Christ.

Is this true? The only valid answers can be found in the Scriptures. Luke reminds us in Acts that "neither is there salvation in any other; for there is no other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." In the telling words of Jesus who said, "he that believeth on Me is not condemned, but he that believeth not is condemned already" and "no man cometh to the Father but by Me." There is and has been only one way to eternal life and that is through Jesus Christ our Lord!

Alarmingly, it appears the idea that "good" people are somehow going to be saved apart from accepting Jesus Christ has affected some Advent Christians as well. Because we do not believe in everlasting hell, have we drifted to a view that there is no future punishment at all or that only the most depraved of mankind will be destroyed in the lake of fire?

The Bible speaks of a coming punishment that is awesome, certain, and eternal in its effect. We read that "those whose names were not found written in the Book of Life were cast into the Lake of Fire."

Many people admit that they cannot believe that a good-living relative, neighbor, friend, or co-worker will really face eternal destruction. They are hoping that somehow there is some other way. If this were true then Christ has died in vain and we can save ourselves. But it is not true! Perhaps the only way to bring this fact home is to ask you to say out loud the name of some loved one or friend with the statement that he or she is going to be destroyed in the fires of hell. If you can say that out loud without a sob in your voice and a pain in your heart, something is wrong!

Is the concept of lostness in poor taste?

Another disturbing survey this time among students at evangelical seminaries was the fact that 46% of them believed that to tell non-believers they

will be damned to punishment if they do not repent of their sins, was in "poor taste." Would we not tell someone if their house was on fire or that they were in danger of falling in a terrible abyss! Of course we would and yet we have been reluctant to tell people that they are lost without Jesus Christ. This lack of compassion for lost people has also affected our missionary endeavor. For if men can be saved by their good works then there is no need to send missionaries and we are just wasting our time.

Someone once said, "A man only truly believes what motivates him to action." In other words if we do not do something it is because we do not believe it enough to act upon it. Joseph Stalin was quoted as saying, "The death of one man is a tragedy, the death of 10,000 is a statistic." Therefore, he could send thousands to death without much response from the rest of the world.

We may become emotionally upset when someone we know dies or is tragically killed and yet sit in church unmoved when the information that a million people a week are dying without Jesus Christ as their Saviour is shared with us. When a child is lost in the woods, dozens maybe even hundreds of people may volunteer to search for him. But when millions of lost people are perishing out there few have been willing to go, find them, and bring them to Christ. Do we really believe that people are lost?

Do we have a burden for lost people?

We need a revival that produces a deep burden for the winning of men and women who are lost and facing God's judgment. Can it no longer be said of us that "knowing the terror of the Lord, we persuade men." Billy Graham tells a story of an Englishman who was sent to the gallows and at the scaffold was cautioned by the chaplain about the wrath to come unless he repented. The convict told the chaplain, "If I believed the way you believed, I would crawl across England on broken glass to warn people." And yet it becomes a real effort for many of us to drive our cars down the street just to invite somebody to church never mind to ask them to take Christ as their Saviour. Lord give us a vision for what it means to be lost and a burden for lost people!

I have often been asked how does one get a burden for lost people? My answer comes from the advice of a later minister friend who once said to me, "You do not automatically get a burden for souls when you are saved. You have to ask for it and realize that when it comes it will hurt!" I have found this to be true! And yet it is needed if we are to grow as a people and carry out the Great Commission.

A burden for the lost certainly involves praying for them. There are some among us who question the legitimacy of praying for the salvation of lost people. Have they missed the prophecy of Isaiah 53:12 where it is said of Jesus, "He would bare the sins of many and make intercession for the transgressors." Or when Jesus said to Peter, "Satan has desired to have you that he might sift you as wheat but I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not and when thou art converted strengthen thy brethren?" Some too, must have missed the great burden of the apostle Paul for his lost countrymen when he would write in Romans 10, "Brethren, my hearts desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they might be saved." Such a spirit was revealed also in the life of John Knox who would pray, "Give me Scotland or I die." Oh, that we might have a great burden to pray earnestly for lost people to be saved!

Jesus said that "I have come to seek and to save those that were lost." He can and wants to save you today. Oh, my friend experience the joy of being found and saved by Christ Jesus! Make your decision for Christ today! □

A graduate of Berkshire Christian College, Rev. Harold Patterson has pastored several Advent Christian congregations and currently serves as Director of World Missions for the Advent Christian General Conference.

From page 9

ing with both their natural parents are beginning to be the minority.

Do you sense, that we are more and more being committed to convenience ourselves? When it is no longer convenient we are no longer committed?

When I was a youngster our churches had a strong sense of responsibility toward the salvation of neighbors and neighborhood children. This was from believing we would be held accountable in the judgment if we were indifferent to them. I can remember Christians filling their cars with kids from the neighborhood for Sunday school. Today we may have two cars from one household arrive at church with only the driver. Do we need ask what has happened to the Sunday school?

There was a day when Advent Christians believed the world was in crisis. Is there any less a crisis today?

Dr. Lyle Schaller compares for us the difference of the growing church of the 1880s and the diminishing church of the 1980s. When the church of the 1880s was growing the emphasis was on performance and competency, whereas the church of the 1980s tends to be more concerned about power and control. In other words our churches have become more self serving. Does this tell us anything? There are many ways to grow a church. Anyone who is getting the job done, any church or pastor who is reaping lost people for God's kingdom need take little suggestion from me. But if you are as concerned as I, and know we cannot continue to do business as usual, we must do something different.

Proclaiming Christ's Return

Let me leave you with one suggestion. Recently, Dr. David Dean published a book entitled *Framing the Prophetic Puzzle*. It's a guide for interpreting prophecy. His hope is it may kindle greater interest in prophecy among Advent Christians. He writes, "Not everything in Bible prophecy is equally important, clear, or practical. But if we're wise, we will learn to focus our attention upon what is most important, clear, and helpful. This means we should concentrate our attention on the Second Coming of Christ."

The preaching and teaching of the return of Jesus leads directly into the gospel message. One personal story may well apply as an effective example. A young lady had been raised in church through her teen years. After high school she went the way of the world. She lived with a man with whom she was not married. She said after recommitting her life to Christ, "When I was in bed with this man the one thought that continued to invade my mind was, "What if Jesus would come while I'm here?"

I thought at the time, the awareness of our Lord's return is a behavior modifier. Jesus is coming again. Perhaps in my lifetime—perhaps not. But He is coming. The world needs to be aware. This year, 1987 A.D., affirms He once came. Scripture affirms he will come again. What then? When in Lewiston, Idaho this spring, Ruth Carter sang a song, verbalizing, "When I See Jesus, I'll Wish I'd Done More." Do you believe when you and I see Jesus we might feel this same way? □

W. James Smith pastored the Valley Advent Christian Church for twenty years. He currently serves as Regional Superintendent for the Western Advent Christian Association. This article was shared by Rev. Smith at the 1987 General Conference meetings in Charleston, West Virginia.

From page 7

and say, "God be with you." It's another to reach out and lift that person up — giving clothes and food and helping them physically as well as spiritually.

By and large there are more conversions through new churches. New churches are preaching the gospel in a fresh way and are concerned about people's needs. New churches are freer from negative traditions that can put up barriers to these people, and again they are presenting the gospel, the same message, an Advent message. We are not watering down Advent Christian beliefs. We are not watering down the gospel message, but we put it in a way where people who need Christ can see it, and that's what is most important.

Donna, what role did your family play in the decision to consider Christian service?

For us, Christian service was a family decision. This was something that was discussed between Randy, myself and our sons. We included our whole family. Also when a decision was made collectively to go in this direction, Randy said to all of us, "If at any time you feel that I am going in a direction away from you, working too much at the church and forgetting the family, let me know. I may become so involved that I need to have you and the boys direct me back, and say, 'Wait a minute we need more of your time.'"

We feel comfortable in doing that. At the outset it was a bit difficult to do but we feel really comfortable in saying, "Hey, Dad, or Gee honey, not this time." I can say I have to go here and many times he will say what do you think about doing this. Then suddenly we discover we need time together. I think its important in any family situation involving ministry that you take into consideration the needs and feelings of the others in your family. That's something that we're striving to do. We know that has been a problem for others and we know God does not want that to happen to us. So we have to follow His principles and teaching that God comes first, then comes your family, then the ministry. □

The Power of Group Prayer

When we are seeking the Lord, He speaks to us in different ways. Sometimes He speaks through the reading of His Word, sometimes through a bold manifestation of His power, and sometimes through a quiet nudging in our spirit. A year and a half ago, each of us was seeking a closer walk with our Lord, when He spoke to us with His quiet nudging, leading us to form an intercessory prayer group that would pray consistently for people's needs.

We started out with four ladies and today we are still four ladies, but the number is not important. The Lord is blessing us in many ways and many of our prayers have been answered.

We formed the *Oak Hill Prayer Group* following the example of the early church. Our model for gathering is provided by Acts 4:31, "And when they had prayed, the place in which they were gathered together was shaken; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God with boldness." This is how we know that it is God's will for us to come together for this purpose.

The power of group prayer is evident all through history. Preceding every great revival were praying men like George Whitefield and John Wesley, We, too, have begun to see the sparks of revival at Oak Hill.

Jesus has kept His promise given in Matthew that, "Whenever two or three are gathered in my name, there I am in the midst of them." We *do* sense His presence when we gather and concentrate on Him. This has turned us into a *prayer* and *praise* group. Once we begin to pray, we can't help but praise God for what He is doing in our lives and the lives of others.

The prayer group has been taught harmony and unity. We agree with each other on every petition brought before the Lord and He seems to blend it together as if it were a song. Sometimes He speaks to each of us separately, and when we come together we receive it as confirmation of the leading of the Spirit. The prayer group has also taught us to hear God speak. When silence settles on the group, thoughts often occur to us, which we share. Sometimes it's scripture or a song, and we find God ministering to us through the others. Listening skills have become much sharper. It has become evident to us that these are all different facets of prayer.

We have found that the prayer group is only one of the ways in which God is mobilizing prayer at Oak Hill Bible Advent Christian Church. Our telephone prayer chain has been updated so as to be more effective, as well as a 24-hour prayer chain put into action.

Factors in an effective prayer group

There are several key factors necessary for an effective prayer group. These are: unity in Jesus Christ, an updated and detailed prayer list, praying conversationally thus promoting spiritual togetherness, and spending most of the time *in prayer*.

Criticism and gossip must have no place. Confidentiality is a priority. (That's why we haven't given any specific examples of the prayers that have been answered in our group — people may be afraid to share their needs with you if they can't trust you to keep it among yourselves.)

It's exciting to witness the miraculous power of God in circumstances that are "hopeless." We find it comforting to know that God's power controls the outcome of every petition laid before Him.

If you have no prayer group in operation at your church, think about starting one. You could meet weekly (as we do), every other week, or even monthly. Remember:

- It's important to share answers to your prayers as they happen (and they *will* happen). This builds your faith and moves you to continue. We write our prayer requests in a notebook (always leave ample room for writing in the answers, which always inspires praise).
- Don't let numbers get in the way. We may never have the large number of members we envisioned at first. Two are enough for God to work through.
- Confidentiality is a must.
- Most important, let your group be God's group and hold it in an open hand. Let God show you how He wants to use you. You might be surprised at some of the things He shows you, but trust Him and He'll go right along with you.
- A good way to start is to learn about prayer. There are many good books about prayer. "No Easy Road," by Dick Eastman is just one of many that are informative and constructive.

Is God speaking to you the way He spoke to us? All He asks is that you be willing to try and He'll lead you and bless you and use you in so many ways. □

—written by the Oak Hill Bible Advent Christian Prayer Group

A review essay

"Accommodation, Accommodation"

Freeman Barton

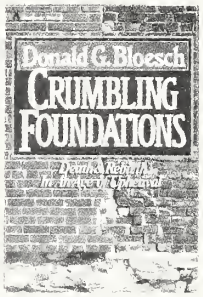
Crumbling Foundations: Death and Rebirth in an Age of Upheaval by Donald G. Bloesch. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1984

The Great Evangelical Disaster by Francis A. Schaeffer. Westchester, Ill.: Crossway Books, 1984

Bad News for Modern Man: An Agenda for Christian Activism by Franky Schaeffer. Westchester, Ill.,: Crossways Books, 1984.

These three books published in the last year are remarkably similar in their basic concerns. Francis A. Schaeffer summarizes it well: "Accommodation, accommodation. How the mindset of accommodation grows and expands. The last sixty years have given birth to a moral disaster, and what have we done? Sadly we must say that the evangelical world has been a part of the disaster. More than this, the evangelical response itself has been a disaster. Where is the clear voice speaking to the crucial issues of the day with distinctively biblical, Christian answers?" (p. 141).

Bloesch more philosophically puts it like this: "The area in which religious conservatives can be faulted most is their glaring inability to discern the encroachment of the values of the technological society upon the domain of the church ...Instead of accommodating the claims of the gospel to the highest values of our culture, we need to unmask those values as resting on an unstable metaphysical foundation."



Who are these men, and what are their concerns? Francis Schaeffer is the most familiar. He was a longtime well-known evangelical author and lecturer and founder of L'Abri Fellowship in Switzerland, which now has a number of branches. (He died in 1985.) His son Franky follows in the father's ideological footsteps. Franky is an artist, author, and filmmaker whose approach to these issues is considerably more prickly than that of his father. Bloesch is a teacher at Dubuque Theological Seminary and a prolific author with a growing reputation as a significant evangelical thinker.

Common concerns

It is not surprising that the thinking of father and son are much alike, however different their tone. It is striking, however, that Bloesch's outlook is so similar. Their common concerns are the tendency of Christian intellectuals to conform to the thought patterns of our day (rationalism, humanism, relativism, subjectivism) and of conservative Christians to conform to the lifestyle of our society (materialism, the American way of life, "personal peace and affluence").

Franky Schaeffer states as most important the sanctity of life; Francis that biblical authority is the watershed issue; Bloesch that the "dominant issue...is idolatry" (p. 79). Specific concerns shared by all are the sanctity of life, sexual morality, the integrity of the family, the bias of the media, the superficial attractiveness of socialism, the threat of an increasingly authoritarian government, and the gradual erosion of our evangelical schools and institutions, and especially the compromising of biblical authority.

All demonstrate some appreciation for positive developments and possibilities. None are fundamentalistic; they want to have an impact on society, not to withdraw from it.

A blunt instrument

To this reviewer Franky Schaeffer's work is the least at-

tractive of the three. As Franky says, it is not scholarly, theological, literary, or "nice." "It is a blunt instrument—not pretty but, I hope, effective...I have not minced words or pulled punches. Instead, I have dealt with the ideas and institutions directly and openly. I prefer honesty to back-stabbing" (p. 143).

The rhetoric is heavy at points. It is designed less to convince than to rouse for action (note the sub-title). His attacks on fellow evangelicals with differing opinions are probably counter-productive. Franky is generally right on the issues, however, and his work will have a positive impact on a certain audience.

Franky's bibliography, "The Literature of Christian Resistance," is helpful. His suggestion of a college course called "Living Consistently as a Christian Minority in a Secular World" (p. 133) is intriguing.

He has a vision for Christian colleges in which they..."become 'think tanks' of resistance. Instead of Christian professors and the academic community of Christendom being eager to assimilate the 'best' of the world into the Christian curriculum, they will instead look for ways to be more distinctive and less acquiescent."

"What will emerge will be a Christian vision that is distinctly Christian in contrast to the secular vision, a vision that is prepared to confront the world and do battle with it in the areas of ideas, politics, morals, social "sciences," law, the arts, the humanities, medicine and science" (p. 127).

The watershed issue

The elder Schaeffer's work is the one for the reader who wants a firm but gentle presentation of the issues which is not too difficult to read. Schaeffer is convinced (rightly it seems to me) that biblical authority is the watershed issue of our time.

The area in which religious conservatives can be faulted most is inability to discern the encroachment of the values of the technological society upon the domain of the church.
—Donald Bloesch

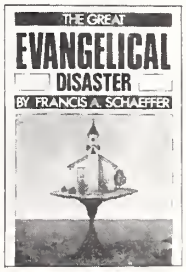
"Unless the Bible is without error," we have no foundation for answering basic questions, including those involved in the hard times that are coming. Only a strong view of Scripture is sufficient to withstand the pressure of an all-pervasive culture based on relativism and relativistic thinking" (p. 46; 48).

Schaeffer cites the striking statement of Martin Luther: "If I profess with the loudest voice and clearest exposition every portion of the truth of God except precisely that little point which the world and the devil are at the moment attacking, I am not confessing Christ, however boldly I may be professing Christ. Where the battle rages, there the loyalty of the soldier is proved and to be steady on all the battle front besides, is mere flight and disgrace if he flinches at that point" (pp. 50-51).

It is sad that a "New Neo-orthodoxy" is being espoused by "evangelicals." They exchange objective truth for subjective experience, thus allowing for "inconsequential" mistakes in historical and scientific matters. Referring to "many truths," they concede to the relativistic spirit of our times.

Here Schaeffer points to the need for *"a line drawn* between those who take a full view of Scripture and those who do not" (p. 51). "Does inerrancy make a difference? Overwhelmingly." Otherwise "Scripture is thus bent to conform to the changing world spirit of the day" (p. 61).

Schaeffer's irenic spirit, however, stands out repeatedly. The following summarizes it well: "As we confront the issues, there must be a proper balance under the leadership of the Holy Spirit while carefully living within the circle of that which is taught in Scripture. Each issue must be met with holiness and love simultaneously.



Continued on page 22

Caroline Michael
Director

"God's Perfect Plan for My Life"

Joan Blackwood

The missing sneaker had been located and the last of the children were on their way to school. Pushing the breakfast dishes aside I crumpled into a kitchen chair. As the dust settled, I settled into deep thought.

Had I been misled? As a young Christian I believed that "God loved me and had a perfect plan for my life" as so many people had said. I knew God loved me, but...as years of dirty clothes, unmade beds, and ever-hungry children rolled on, I wondered about "His perfect plan." Where was it?

Where was God's plan for me?

I had been active in church but somehow my poorly disciplined Sunday school primaries, the giddy teen youth group, and the many Sundays spent in the church nursery seemed far removed from a "perfect plan." Great evangelists, church leaders, and even Bible study leaders had a threatening effect. In my eyes they were doing God's work. I was still looking.

And I had looked many places. I cringed as I remembered the Bible study for ladies I had begun. Six women showed up with their thirteen preschool children. I quickly moved on in my thoughts to my attempts at going back to college.

My classes were planned so that my children could be left in the care of my husband. After four weeks a neighbor informed me that as I drove away, I was soon followed by my crying two-year old. With security blanket in tow, he would run out into the road and with arms outstretched, wail, "Ma, ma!" That would be her clue. She would run down from her porch, sweep him up out of the busy road, deposit him inside the back door, and instruct one of his brothers, then four and six, to "watch him." That bit of information, combined with the week of finals when all three boys came down with chicken pox, ended my college career.

Substitute teaching seemed satisfying for awhile until I taught a third grade class. The teacher was to be married over spring vacation, but had decided at the last minute to take extra days off in order to get ready. Unknown to her, her students had planned a surprise wedding shower. They showed up with presents, cake, and punch. I showed up with her plan book. Six and one-half hours later I gave up teaching for good.

I looked forward to long fulfilling hours of work or Christian service once the children were in school. However, as the last child neared school age it became necessary to provide a home for my elderly grandmother.

Searching the scriptures

Lately I have found myself preoccupied with the obituaries and secretly wondered how mine would read. "Fifty years a nobody" seemed too optimistic as I opened my Bible that day to look for an answer to my search for God's perfect plan.

I had to be realistic. The crown offered great soul winners would never rest on my brow. I couldn't even get out of the house. Hoping there was some other job a housewife and mother could do, I decided to look under the word "reward" in my Bible concordance. I reasoned that if God gave a reward, the job must please Him.

Sure enough, the first rewards mentioned by Jesus went to the big shots. He had been talking to the general followers and then He turned to his disciples and said, "Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven" (Matthew 5:12).

I smiled as I realized the reason for the reward, i.e., well taken persecution. For the first time in my Christian life I no longer

wanted to be in the limelight. I'm the type that takes persecution poorly.

Relieved, I continued to search. Matthew 5:46 was next on the list. "If you love those who love you, what reward will you get?" I took that to mean, "You will be rewarded if you love those who do not love you." My neighbor came to mind, the one who called me to complain at every bark of my dog. Struggles to love instead of hate finally resulted in our giving away the dog. "God's plan can be right next door," I noted.

Chapter six of Matthew held some encouragement. If I were to give, pray, and fast in secret, I would please God. God notices the things that men don't notice. He "sees in secret." No longer would I cringe over the undisciplined Sunday school kids, giddy teens, and the church nursery. No one would ever notice that work...but God.

Matthew 10:41, "Anyone who receives a prophet because he is a prophet will receive a prophet's reward..." came next. I was amazed. I didn't have to be a great soul winner in order to be in God's perfect plan. If I welcomed a prophet, I would please Him. "No room for jealousy here," I thought, as I determined to receive a prophet's reward.

Going from the greatest to the least, Matthew 10:42 said, "And if anyone gives a cup of cold water to one of these little ones because he is my disciple, I tell you the truth, he will certainly not lose his reward." The multitude of dirty glasses in the sink left by my three sons and their friends took on new meaning.

I sat back for a moment to evaluate what I'd been reading. All the actions which pleased God seemed so simple if the heart was right, yet impossible if there was pride, jealousy, or a desire to get even.

Character, not activity

"God, forgive me!" I cried. "I've been looking for activity when all along You've been looking for character."

I rose from my chair happier than I had been in a long time. The breakfast dishes seemed a joy. They were part of God's perfect plan (an extension of the cup of cold water). The housework seemed to fly as I realized I didn't have to leave my home in order to fulfill His plan in me.

My obituary may read, "Fifty years a nobody," but it won't matter. The God who sees in secret will have had fifty years to change my heart into something that pleases Him. And I will be able to say without a doubt, "God loved me, and had a perfect plan for my life." □

Joan is a freelance writer and has had a successful business in recent years making original dollhouse dolls. She is married to Paul Blackwood and they have two sons in college and a third one at home. Joan lives in Weare, New Hampshire and is a summer resident at the Alton Bay Christian Conference Center.

Resolution

The following resolution was adopted at the Eastern Region Woman's Home and Foreign Mission Society Convention at Alton Bay, N.H., May 29, 1987:

Whereas Ada Whiting served as President of the Eastern Region WHFMS for 17 years as a loving and dedicated leader, and inasmuch as a gift of $500 given in her memory will be sent to India, the primary field of interest during her years as president, to be used for scholarships for the School of Evangelism,

Be it resolved that we join our hearts with Elsie Towle in a prayer of thanksgiving for her long and loving service to the Lord and the Eastern Region.

News & Notes

Santa Cruz, California

Our missionaries on summer furlough from Japan, Austin and Dorothy Warriner, shared daily at Camp Santa Cruz from the Word of God and about their work with the Japanese people. One afternoon during camp the Northern California WHFMS held their annual meeting. They voted to give a one hundred dollar honorarium to the Warriners, to pledge $250 to their conference, to send $150 to Oro Bible College in the Philippines and $150 to aid Japanese pastors further their education. The following officers will be serving: President Grace Hughes, Vice-president Jill Pratt, Secretary Lillian Willis, and Treasurer Donna Creecy.

Smoaks, South Carolina

Grace Lyons, reporter for the Buckhead WHFMS, writes that their local has started an active evangelism committee. They are visiting the sick, elderly, and shut-ins in their community, sharing from the Scripture and having prayer with these lonely people. They held a mother-daughter banquet with Southern Region WHFMS President Eloise Robertson as special guest and a program presented by the Junior Action youth. They commended the WHFMS program kit for 1987 stating that the programs have inspired their women.

Attleboro, Massachusetts

WHFMS President Nina McGinnes has started a newsletter which includes several praise and prayer items from "Call to Prayer," news from missionaries, local news items and announcements of future events, and a recipe in "The Cook's Corner."

Mount Olive, North Carolina

The Salem WHFMS has worked on their short-term and long-range goals since the presentation of the first TRP workshop. These goals were enclosed with their recent monthly newsletter for each member to evaluate and study. The WHFMS officers gave a brunch for non-members to give an opportunity to discuss the possibility of establishing another circle. The Salem newsletter includes a letter of challenge or encouragement from their president, Janet Jackson, secretary and committee reports, a photo copy of the "Call to Prayer," and an announcement of their upcoming monthly meeting.

Philippine missionary Margaret Helms and Director of Women's Ministries Caroline Michael at the National WHFMS Convention in Charleston, West Virginia. Photo by Dorothy Warriner.

National Convention Challenges

Delegates at the National Triennial WHFMS Convention in Charleston, West Virginia adopted the following goals. We want all our women to know about these actions, and we ask that all of you give your wholehearted support to help us fulfill each one.

1. To have an evangelism committee or actively participate in the church evangelism committee in 50% of our locals by 1988 and have a 10% increase in each of the next two years.

2. To increase giving to Christmas in October by 10% each year.

3. To increase membership 10% each year.

4. To promote retreats for spiritual growth in each conference.

5. To use "Guidelines for Growth" to stimulate and motivate each local annually.

6. To support and encourage growth in children's ministries (Junior Action and King's Jewels).

7. To enhance the working relationship with the pastor through cooperative planning and improved communications.

8. To strengthen the Young Woman's Auxiliary.

Helpful Hints

Kool-Aid and Carpet

Pour boiling water on the stain and absorb it with a cloth.

Candles

To prevent candles from dripping as burned, store in the refrigerator before use.

Lemons

A lemon stored in water will keep longer and will yield more juice with less squeezing.

Skinning Chicken

Grasp the chicken skin with a paper towel and it will pull off more easily.

Preventing Mixer Mess

When using your electric mixer on high speed, prepare a bonnet with aluminum foil or with waxed paper to prevent splattering on your walls and cupboard.

In Memorium

Ruby Thumith	M/M Leslie Mark Elsie Kirby
Violet Boy	Virginia A. Bell Harry & Elizabeth Berlin Elfrida Coutu Marguerite Hall Frances Hastings Howard L. Lovering Harriet Muise Elaine Murphy Dr./Mrs. Robert Rix Dorothy Squire
June Fowler	Rev. James A. Johnson Danville WHFMS
Faye Feeler	Rev. James A. Johnson Danville WHFMS

Memorial contributions through WHFMS are credited to the Clarence L. Kirby Fund for world missions.

Mission Prayer Partnership

October

19 **Praise** the Lord for people already being won in our new work in **Mexico.**

20 Pray for **Senor Abel Garcia** the supervisor of our Mexican work that God would bless him in this leadership and also in the Hispanic Bible studies he is conducting in southern California.

21 **Pray** for **Senors Arturo Angulo** and **Ever Perez** in their church planting efforts in Mexico.

22 **Pray** for **Alberto Gomez** with his church planting efforts in Tijuana, Mexico.

23 **Pray** for World Mission Director, **Harold Patterson** as he prepares to visit the fields of Japan and the Philippines.

24 **Pray** for the **Mannivakkam Church** in India that was burned by Hindu fanatics in July.

25 **Praise** the Lord for the new home mission churches starting in southern **Maine.**

26 **Pray** for **Marion Damon** as she plans another School of Evangelism in India training young men to plant churches.

27 **Pray** for **Barbara White** as she ministers at Kodaikanal and assists Marion Damon in the School of Evangelism.

28 **Pray** for **Beryl Joy Hollis** as she serves as advisor for the mission work in India.

29 **Pray** for Nigerian superintendent **E.K. Akpan** that God would continue to meet his needs as he guides the work in Nigeria.

30 **Pray** for **Thambusamy** and **Victoria Devairakkam** in their growing work in Kluang, Malaysia.

31 **Pray** for **Lucas** and **Beulah Devasahayam** in their ministry in Banting, Malaysia.

November

1 **Pray** that God would mightily use **Chaplain Michael Gardiner** at Fort Sill, Oklahoma.

Prayer Partnership

2 **Pray** for **Floyd** and **Musa Powers** as they guide new growing churches in Japan.

3 **Pray** for **Austin** and **Dorothy Warriner** in their ministry that the Lord of the Harvest would continue to raise up laborers in their work both home and abroad.

4 **Pray** for **Margaret Helms** with her busy schedule in the Philippines.

5 **Pray** for **Alice Brown** that God would continue to grant her strength as she directs the growing Bible College in the Philippines.

6 **Pray** for **Frank** and **Judy Jewett** that God would continue to give them souls for their labors in Cebu.

7 **Pray** for **Dave Vignali** in his important ministry for our mission in the Philippines.

8 **Pray** for **Francis** and **Lyne Ssebikindu** in the challenging and demanding work in Memphis.

9 **Pray** for **Pastor Carlos Quintero** that God will continually bless his efforts in the Hispanic work in Pasadena, California.

10 **Pray** for the **children** of our missionaries especially for Rebecca Powers today on this her birthday.

11 **Pray** for **Dr. Roland Griswold,** Director of Church Expansion that God would continue to see his efforts bear fruit in new churches.

12 **Pray** for the **national pastors** in Nigeria and Malaysia today.

13 **Pray** for our Advent Christian brethren in **China** that God would sustain them at this time.

14 **Pray** for **national workers in Japan** and the **Philippines** for God to bless their efforts.

15 **Pray** for **Oro Bible College** and the growing student body that God would provide for their needs and help in the expansion for them.

16 **Pray** for the **national pastors in India** both in the conference and in the mission that God would again multiply their ministry.

17 **Pray** for our retired missionaries that God would grant them the evidence of His presence today.

18 **Pray** for **Advent Christian** missionaries who serve in mission groups spreading the gospel into all the world.

Accommodation **Continued from pg. 17**

"To be really Bible-believing and true to our living Christ, each issue demands a balance which says "no" to two opposite errors: we can neither compromise love in the name of holiness; nor can we compromise holiness in the name of love. Or to say it another way: the devil never gives us the luxury of fighting the battle on just one front" (p. 100).

The technological danger

Bloesch is a little "heavier" reading (more scholarly) and therefore somewhat more intellectually stimulating. He points repeatedly to the dangers of "a technological amorality where the only norms are utility and productivity" (p. 54), "a soulless technology in the service of pleasure and power" (p. 65), a pervasive "technological rationalism" (p. 87), and "scientific rationalism" (p. 86).

This "idolatry" is connected to the imminent threat of "a creeping democratic totalitarianism" (p. 69): "The logic of naturalism and relativism, so relentlessly fostered in our educational institutions, finally leads to the eradication of the bonds that hold family life together and keep the social order intact. The Judaeo-Christian tradition is being challenged as never before by militant amoralists who aspire to create a society ruled by an elite of social scientists and technocrats dedicated to the pursuit of power and pleasure (p. 55).

We see "the harbingers of a new authoritarianism" which people will accept "to gain security from the enveloping chaos" (pp. 76-77). This "friendly fascism" is already evident in the removal of Bob Jones University's tax-exempt status (p. 72; note that Bloesch is *not* a fundamentalist).

Bloesch has wise words for institutions preparing ministers. They, "if they are to resist the lure of the technological society, will have to stress the recovery of the historical roots of faith over communication skills and church growth strategies. In a climate in which the theological enterprise has become all too often, "a technology," they will have to muster the courage to give priority to content over methodology. Failure to respond to this challenge will unleash on the long-suffering local parishes a generation of technocrats with all the spiritual warmth and fervor of a computer (p. 111).

Bloesch does not let "the new religious right" off lightly. They retain the doctrines of the faith, but they tie them to a social ideology, political and economic conversatism. They seek "a rapprochement between biblical faith and the American Way of Life. This too is a form of secularism" (p. 46). □

A frequent contributor to Advent Christian publications, Dr. Freeman Barton taught for many years at Berkshire Christian College. He currently works as Director of Library Resources at Warner Southern College in Lake Wales, Florida.

Despite Objections, We Need New Churches

Gary Bailey

Recently I took a stand on the need for new churches. From the response, I gather it made some pastors feel uncomfortable. I can understand that, although I still maintain we need more churches.

We cannot be satisfied with simply maintaining our congregations. Such a stance is founded upon several common misconceptions:

1. That most new churches result from negative church splits. This is simply not the case. But even if it were so, planting a new church with disgruntled members from a split church is far superior to the most common alternative—letting them drift into inactivity and unfruitfulness, lost to the cause of Christ.

2. That a new church wants my flock. New churches usually win new people to Christ, people we could not have won because we don't know them, don't offer the programs they need, or don't have a worship style they enjoy.

Conversely, established Christians often feel ill at ease in a new work. The lack of choirs, youth groups and other benefits leave our members feeling like "this isn't church." The new church—from the job description of the pastor to the demands made on its leaders—is geared to winning lost souls.

One last point about "sheep stealing." According to church growth expert Donald McGavran, "Contented sheep can't be stolen." If we are caring for our flock, they won't leave.

3. That church planting fractures the Body of Christ.

The very motif, "Body," implies different members, parts and functions. If people are added to the Kingdom in a new church, it is not fracture but growth. Human cells grow by multiplying; when they stop, you are dying.

It is the same thing in church planting. Somewhere between 3500 and 4000 American churches died last year. If new cells are not formed to replace them, the future will be bleak indeed.

Of course, church planters have their misconceptions and insensitivities. I can think of three:

1. We often hear new church planters say there is "no gospel witness" in a community where there are several churches. Sometimes the existing churches are too liberal for their taste, but most often this is thoughtlessness or pride.

Be that as it may, in every town segments of the population can't hear the gospel in its current form or place. Culture, race, socio-economic strata and many other factors keep significant portions of my town from confronting Christ through my church. In effect, there is no gospel they can hear and understand.

2. Another more hurtful tack taken by a few church planters is to claim on the basis of denominational labels that there are no true believers in a town's existing churches. There will always be some in the wider Body of Christ who think they are the only ones on the road to Glory. Don't take it personally. They don't think I'm saved either. Just do the work of Christ anyway.

Church growth researchers have found that the very attitude of these extreme separatist groups, however, is one factor leading to their growth. They believe "we must win this town or they will all be lost." Our response must be as Paul's when he said, "It does not matter! I am happy about it—just so Christ is preached in every way possible, whether from wrong or right motives. And I will continue to be happy..." (Phil. 1:18 TEV).

3. A very, very few church planters have even done some downright tacky things, like trying to obtain other churches' membership lists as a launching base. Either I am naive or this practice is very rare. But again, I in no way condone it.

We cannot afford to condemn one of the primary means God uses to reach the lost community because of a few poor practitioners. There is enough of a mission field to go around. In 1985 there were only 12 churches for every 10,000 Americans.

There are dangers in church planting. A church planter must always search his heart about his motives. I especially remind myself that "the Kingdom, and the Power and the Glory" are His.

But more grievous and sure consequences come from not planting new churches. Groups that plant new churches thrive and grow. Those who don't, weaken and die. It is as simple as that. Here or anywhere. □

Dr. Gary Bailey is a church planting consultant and pastor of Emmanuel Advent Christian Church in Rochester, N.H. Used by permission of New England Church Life, *a publication of the Evangelistic Association of New England.*

Your Servants for Christ's Cause

International Missionaries

Philippines

Alice Brown (March 24)
Box 223
Cagayan de Oro City 8401
PHILIPPINES

Margaret Helms (September 18)
P.O. Box 263
Cebu City 6401
PHILIPPINES

Frank and Judy Jewett
(December 11 and January 29)
Danny Jewett (June 13, 1976)
Timmy Jewett (June 26, 1978)
Letitia Jewett (April 13, 1980)
P.O. Box 263
Cebu City 6401
PHILIPPINES

David Vignali (May 10)
P.O. Box 263
Cebu City 6401
PHILIPPINES

Japan

Floyd and Musa Powers
(October 8 and February 28)
Rebecca Powers (Nov. 11, 1971)
18 - 11- 4 Motoyama Kita cho
Higashinada ku, Kobe shi 658
JAPAN

Austin and Dorothy Warriner
(January 1 and January 18)
3-37 Okayama Higashi
5 Chome; Osaka Fu 575
JAPAN

India

Marion Damon (March 27)
Box 17, Andivilla
Kodaikanal 624101
INDIA

Beryl Joy Hollis (Decemb
American Advent Missior
Velacheri, Madras 600 04
INDIA

Barbara White (January 1
Box 17, Andivilla
Kodaikanal 624101
INDIA

AC04343
University of North Carolina
Serials Dept Davis Library
080 A
Chapel Hill, NC 27514

National Missionaries

Malaysia

Thambusamy and
Victoria Devairakkam
3A, Jalan Sayang Housing Trust
86000 Kluang, Johor
MALAYSIA

Lucas and Beulah Devasahayam
30, Jalan Cempaka
Taman Gembira
42700 Banting, Selangor
MALAYSIA

Memphis

Francis and Lyne Ssebikindu
(May 13 and May 8)
Faith Nancy (September 28, 1982)
Ashley Grace (January 21, 1985)
2590 Faxon Avenue
Memphis, TN 38112

Mexico

Abel Garcia
618 "E" Street Suite "E"
Chula Vista, CA 92010

Alberto Gomez
Arthuro Angelo
Ever Perez
c/o Abel Garcia

Nigeria

E. A. Akpan—Superintendent
Nigerian Advent Christian Mission
Ediene Ikot Obio Imo,
P.O. Box 1642
Uyo; NIGERIA

Advent Christian General Conference
P.O. Box 23152
Charlotte, NC 28212

Harold Patterson; World Missions
Millie Griswold; Christian Education
Caroline Michael; Women's Ministries
Roland Griswold; Church Expansion
Robert W. Cole; Finance
Robert Mayer; Publications
David Northup; Executive Vice-president

C286.7/A24

Advent Christian WITNESS

November 1987

Helping New Christians Grow in Christ

page eight

Member
epa
Evangelical Press Association

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
Robert J. Mayer

MISSIONS
Harold Patterson

WHFMS
Caroline M. Michael

GRAPHIC ARTS
Linda Perault

TYPESETTING
Susan Gettis

MEMBER MISSION

EVANGELICAL COUNCIL FOR FINANCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY
ECFA
MEMBER
The symbol of trust

Advent Christian Witness (ISSN 0741-4307) is published monthly except for a combined July-August issue, 11 times a year, by the Advent Christian General Conference of America, 14601 Albemarle Road, P.O. Box 23152, Charlotte, NC 28212. Postmaster: Send address changes to *Advent Christian Witness*, P.O. Box 23152, Charlotte, NC.

Policy: As the official publication of the Advent Christian General Conference of America, the *Advent Christian Witness* publishes the teachings of the Advent Christian Church and promotes the task of evangelism both in North America and throughout the world.

Rates in the U.S. and Canada: one year, $11.00. Single Copy, $1.00. Overseas one year, $14.00.

All articles and materials are copyright ©1987 by the Advent Christian General Conference unless otherwise indicated. Permission to reprint available upon request. The views expressed in this magazine are those of the author and may not necessarily reflect those of the editor or the Advent Christian General Conference.

from the editor

The Issue is Religious Freedom

The first amendment to the United States Constitution begins, "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof..." These simple words give rise to heated debate in the legal, governmental, and religious communities.

Does the first amendment forbid religious expression in public places like schools, courts, and government institutions? Does the amendment disallow any moral judgments in shaping government policy on issues like school reform, tax law, AIDS, marriage and family issues, and the like? The answer to both questions is a resounding: "No"!

Many accept the notion that the first amendment constitutes *two* religion clauses, one forbiding establishment and one protecting religious freedom, that must be balanced against each other. Rev. Richard John Neuhaus, editor of *The Religion and Society Report*, challenges that notion and in this editor's opinion, he's right on target.

Pastor Neuhaus writes, "...there is one religion clause, not two. The first meaning of a 'clause' is that it is an article or stipulation. The two-part religion clause of the First Amendment stipulates that there must be no establishment of religion. The reason for this is to avoid any infringement on the free exercise of religion. Put differently, the free exercise of religion requires the non-establishment of religion. Non-establishment is not good in itself. The positive good is free exercise, to which non-establishment is essential." (*Religion and Society Report*, June 1987)

In other words, when non-establishment is used to restrict or prohibit religious expression in public life, the first amendment is misused. The principle of church-state separation was never meant to separate moral judgments based on religious values from public life.

The framers of the United States Constitution intended to create a climate where religious freedom could flourish. They realized that if one denomination or religious organization was granted official status, the freedom of people to worship as they please would be jeopardized.

There are those in today's society who misuse the non-establishment part of the first amendment religion cause to exclude religion from public life. Their goal is a society where Judeo-Christian values are divorced from law and government and where religious freedom is restricted.

That misuse of the first amendment was not the intention of those who framed the Constitution. Richard Neuhaus writes, "Those who would, under the cover of 'no-establishment,' exclude religion and religiously based moral judgment from public policy are, wittingly or not, opposing the very idea of democratic governance."

Christians have a constitutional right and a moral obligation to participte in society. The first amendment encourages us to do so. We have every right to insist that moral judgments and Biblical values be taken into account in all aspects of government and public life. We must also insist that all interpretations of the first amendment be used to protect and not restrict religious freedom. □

Volume 35 Number 10

Advent Christian WITNESS

November 1987

FEATURES

Is Your God Too Small? David A. Dean 4
In his address to the General Conference delegates, Dr. Dean challenges Advent Christians to embrace the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

Growing in Christ: The New Christian's Second Step S.D. Teddler 8
Effective Christian living doesn't stop at conversion. Some practical steps for helping new believers grow in Christ.

The Tennessee War Horse A. Cameron Ainsworth 10
A.J. Sanderlin was a gifted man of God who ministered to the physical and spiritual needs of many. He planted Advent Christian churches among Black Americans and stood as an example of Christian love and compassion.

From Uganda With God's Love an interview with Francis Ssebikindu 12
Francis and Lynn Ssebikindu have come from Uganda to minister with Advent Christian World Missions in Memphis, Tennessee. Francis shares how God delivered him from near death in Uganda to Christian service in the United States.

ON THE COVER

Christian growth doesn't happen automatically. An important part of a new believer's Christian life is the friendship and example a mature Christian can supply.

photo by Jim Whitmer

DEPARTMENTS

From the Editor 2

Review 16

Women's Ministries 18

Prayer Partnership 21

Charles Colson 23

Is Your GOD *too Small?*

Tonight as Advent Christians, we have gathered together from all over the United States and Canada, indeed, from the whole world. We're here to celebrate the 125th anniversary of our organization as a distinct people. And we are here to commit ourselves to a renewal of the vision that made us a people. I thank you for coming and I thank the Program Committee for according me the honor of being able to help you ask, "What is the vision that we want to share?"

A Christian vision must be Christ-centered

I'm impressed that we are not now unanimous as Advent Christians in the answer to that question. In one sense, I suppose each one of us has his own vision of what we as a denomination have to offer to one another and to the world. Many of these visions are worthy and I have no desire to attack them.

But I'm constrained to urge you that we must be careful to remember that a denominational vision needs to be noble, elevating, and challenging. We do ourselves a grave injustice if we accept as our denominational vision anything that is unworthy, petty, trivial, or otherwise insignificant.

A Christian vision, I remind you, is not an earthly vision but a heavenly one. It is not a mere activity, but an uplifting inspiration. It is not measured in quantity but in quality. And it must not be church-centered but Christ-centered.

Because this is true, we must resist the temptation to adopt denominational preservation or denominational expansion as our vision. We must resist, tempting though it may be, the desire to make this our purpose and to interpret this as our divine call. As J.B. Phillips, the Bible translator, once reminded us: *Your God is Too Small.* Likewise, I would remind us that if we call for mere denominational expansion our vision is too small.

Your vision is too small if it's merely the preservation or the expansion of the Advent Christian denomination. The Scripture says, "Where there is no vision, the people perish." And I say we do no better when our vision is petty, worldly, earthly, or trivial.

In this respect, a Christian denomination is not at all unlike the individual Christian to whom Jesus addressed these words: "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake and the Gospel will save it." For the individual, self-preservation is an unworthy vision. It leads only to death. For the individual the glory of Christ and the Gospel is the worthy vision that leads to a new life.

And do you think that it is any different with a denomination? I tell you no! If we seek only to preserve our numbers, only to expand our organization, we take the low road and the broad road and we know the destination at the end.

The late Mohandas Gandhi once contended with a seller of alcoholic beverages. He pointed out the evil consequences of this business to the nation of India. One by one he destroyed the arguments of this wine seller. The man defended himself valiantly. Until finally, all he could say in frustration was, "But I have to live. I have to live." Where upon Gandhi looked at him with a long penetrating moment of silence before asking, "Why?"

If denominational survival, preservation, or expansion is our vision, then Gandhi's question lingers in this auditorium tonight. It haunts me. Why? Why must we preserve this denomination, why must we expand our numbers? Tell me why. To what end? For what purpose? To what good? And if you have an answer to those questions then, my friends, let that answer become our vision; the vision which we share with one another

and share with the world.

So for myself, I do not want to hear your tabulation of how bad things are supposed to be. Do not beat me with your statistics of numbers of churches, numbers of members, or numbers of conferences, especially if all you want to do is give me the bad numbers. Because I do not need and I do not want to be discouraged. What I need and what I want is to be inspired by a vision, to be uplifted, to be challenged, to be motivated and I believe I speak for all of us as Advent Christians in that desire.

Now, my friends, it is the noble vision that motivates. We cannot commit ourselves to what is grand and glorious and worthy until we gain that vision. We must see the vision and all its glory if we are ever to follow it with all of our strength and our other resources.

A vision that transforms

I have found for myself help in seeking an answer to the question "what is our vision" by considering the vision given to Saul of Tarsus on the Damascus Road. That vision, my friends, transformed that man. His beliefs were never again the same. His activities were completely reversed. And that young Jewish rabbi became the great missionary of Jesus Christ. That vision on the Damascus Road redirected him. It transformed him. It motivated him to become the outstanding leader of the early Christian church.

That vision on the Damascus Road broke the mold into which the world had been conforming Saul. It renewed and transformed his mind into the image of Christ. That vision led him to the disinvestment of all his holdings in the kingdoms of this world, and to his laying up of treasure in heaven in the kingdom of our God and of his Christ. That vision did for Paul, later the Apostle, all that you and I would like for our denominational vision to do to and for us.

Paul's vision on the Damascus Road centered on the glorious reality of the Lordship of Christ. Out of that blinding light, infinitely more splendorous than the sun of our solar system, Saul heard the voice of Jesus. And Jesus demanded to know why Saul had been persecuting him. "Who are you, Lord?" Paul asked. He received the inescapable and unavoidable news. "I am Jesus whom you are persecuting." It was not the result of human reasoning, logic, or even sound systematic theology, but the result of Christ's gracious personal encounter with Saul of Tarsus. Out of that, Saul understood that Jesus Christ is Lord! Lord of the believer, Lord of the church, Lord of salvation, Lord of immortality and life, Lord of all creation, and Lord of all history! In a moment, the awesome reality that Jesus, the one he had been persecuting, was both Lord and Christ, broke over him.

Later on he would always remember with horror that he had once been a blasphemer, a persecutor and a violent man. He could only rejoice that "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners of whom I am the chief."

Now, my friends, from this vision flowed the lofty view of Jesus Christ which expresses itself in all of Paul's New Testament writings. Paul's usual title for his savior is "Lord." That Greek word which translates the Hebrew word *Jehovah* is the word Paul takes to discuss his Savior and Lord.

He describes the great things that Christ said during his earthly ministry as "commandments of the Lord." It is for Paul the Lord who disciplines us when we take communion in an unworthy manner. It is as Lord that Christ will raise us from death and give us the victory over the grave. It is as Lord that Christ, "will reign until He has put all of his enemies under his feet." And Paul sees this glorious Lordship of Christ stretching as it does from eternity to eternity, until it is finally acknowledged by every moral and intelligent creature in the universe.

So he urges upon us as serious Christians, "Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus, who being in the very nature of God did not consider equality with God something to be grasped. But made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness and being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death even death on a cross. Therefore, God has exalted him to the highest place, and given him the name which is above every name that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow in heaven and on earth and under the earth and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father." You recognize Philippians 2:5-11.

Continued on next page

A vision of Jesus Christ

What ought our vision to be as Advent Christians? What is it? What has it been? Ours is a vision of Jesus Christ as Lord. And our task is to acknowledge him as Lord in fact as well as in theory. To serve him as Lord, to proclaim him as Lord and to worship him as Lord. In other words, we are to do precisely what the remaining eleven disciples did following Christ's resurrection according to Matthew 28:16-20. We're to believe what he has said, do what he has commanded, and worship him.

The vision of Christ as Lord is and has always been fundamental to our distinctive doctrines as a people. Why do we stress so much the physical bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead? Why is that the cornerstone of our faith as Advent Christians? Because As Peter said in Acts 2:36, "Let all Israel be assured of this. God has made this Jesus whom you crucified both Lord and Christ."

Why have we emphasized, particularly in our earlier days, the second advent of Christ as a glorious return in power and great glory? Is it not because we have believed with all our hearts that Christ is the rightful owner and master of this whole universe? And do we not recognize that He will demonstrate Himself to be the King over kings, and the Lord over lords? Do we not look forward to the day when the kingdom of this world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ and He will reign forever and ever? Then as Isaac Watts paraphrased the Psalm, "Jesus shall reign where'er the sun does his successive journeys run."

Does not the Lordship of Christ also find expression in our view that life and immortality is a gift of God through Christ alone? All have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. The wages of sin is death. The soul that sinneth, it shall die. Apart from Christ, all human beings are spiritually dead and apart from Christ, they are destined to die in the judgment fires of Gehenna and to become as though they had never been.

But our Savior Jesus Christ, our Lord, has destroyed death. He has brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel. And so our sovereign Lord not only holds the keys to death and to hell but He has the power in and of and by Himself to give to his own in the great day of Resurrection the fullness of eternal life and bodily immortality.

A full biblical view of Christ's Lordship

Our vision, my friends, has included and it must continue to include in a more self-conscious way a full Biblical conception of the Lordship of Jesus Christ. I say it must continue to include because we must be careful. We must determine that we as a people will affirm concerning Jesus Christ everything that the Scriptures teach us about Jesus Christ.

Now when Paul recognized the Lordship of Christ on the Damascus Road, Christ immediately gave Saul a vision of himself as Christ's servant. "Now get up and go into the city and you will be told what you must do." Jesus says. Later on he speaks through Ananias. God says concerning Paul, "This man is my chosen instrument to carry my name before the Gentiles and their kings and before the people of Israel. I will show him how much he must suffer for my name."

Paul summarized the entire Damascus vision many years later before King Agrippa. And he says, "The Lord replied to me, 'Now get up and stand on your feet. I have appeared to appoint you as a servant and as a witness of what you have seen of me and what I will show you. I will rescue you from your own people and from the Gentiles. I am sending you to open their eyes and turn them from darkness to light, from the power of Satan to God that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified in me.' "

Now any denomination that begins to comprehend what it means that Christ is Lord will begin at the very same time to understand what it means that we are his servants. Christ is the Lord of the church. He is the head of the church which is his body. He must rule in the church if he is to be truly Lord over the church.

Expressing our servanthood through global evangelism

The primary issue then is not what Christ will do for the Advent Christian denomination. It is, my friends, what we will do for Him. And our vision must be this: That whatever happens we will serve Christ. That we will do His will. That we will do His work in the world and that we will die doing it if necessary. If our vision of service is the same as Paul's, note what that will include: "to carry My name before the Gentiles and Israel, to be a witness of what I will show you, to open their eyes and to turn them from darkness to light."

In other words, our servanthood is to be expressed by means of

global evangelism. We serve Christ by bearing witness concerning Christ as Lord to both Jews and Gentiles, to both our own people and foreigners, to both our neighbors next door and around the world. Anything less than wholehearted, sacrificial, global evangelism demonstrates we have not yet seen what it means to be a servant to Jesus Christ.

There can be no doubt that a commitment to evangelism has always been a part of the Advent Christian vision. William Miller and his loyal band of early Adventist preachers in the 1800s were evangelists. They announced the good news of Christ's return to this world. They urged their hearers to repent, believe, and seek the Lord while he might be found and to call upon Him while the day of grace was still there. And tens of thousands of people received that message, accepted that witness, and trusted in Christ as Lord.

So also those men and women who formed the Advent Christian Association in 1860; Horace L. Hastings and his wife Harriet; Miles Grant; C.F. Hudson; Edwin Burnham; I.C. Wellcome, and a host of others were people whose hearts burned within them with a message they had to share: Christ is Lord and He is coming again. He is the one who gives eternal life and immortality and we must seek Him before it is too late.

A call to service regardless of cost

And if you and I discover what it means truly to be servants of Christ, our hearts, too, will burn within us. We will seek, regardless of the cost, to be those people who will share this witness and bring

Continued on pg. 17

Diaphanous

Raymond Beecroft

If you do not have a daily custom of spiritual reading, I encourage you to engage in this. God will lead you to remarkable discoveries.

Recently in my reading I encountered an unfamiliar word — *diaphanous* -a thin membrane through which light shines from the other side; a thin separation between one state of being to another.

It reminds me of how I determine the theme of a sermon. I read the Bible, a book, and magazine articles— and in this process ask God what I should preach about. As I read, a word or a phrase will grip my heart, and from that a sermon will emerge.

Such a word is *diaphanous*, for it tells me that the glorious light of God's presence is always close to us.

In our faithlessness we build thick walls and sometimes question why we do not feel the warmth of God's love, or the light of hope in the experience we are going through at the moment.

Our relationship with God, which we all have, is diaphanous — there is only a very thin wall of separation.

I think of His promises. "Call upon me and I will answer," and "Lo I am with you always and forever," and "I will never leave you nor forsake you."

Mrs. Beecroft had many hours of hard labor with one of our children. She later told me that at the peak of it she remembered the words of Paul, "I can do all things through Christ who gives me strength, and this carried her through. She touched the Lord — for there was only a thin wall of separation. He was there and carried her through a difficult experience of life.

Do you believe in angels, particularly an angel presence? The Bible says, "The angel of the Lord encamps around those who fear him" (Ps. 34:7).

When the angel came to Mary, he said, "Do not be afraid." Have you ever experienced a time that was stressful or frightening only to be followed by a feeling of calm and stillness? It was at that time an angel came and calmed your troubled heart. You pondered this for a fleeting moment and wondered why you were able to endure this — it was not as difficult as you thought it would be.

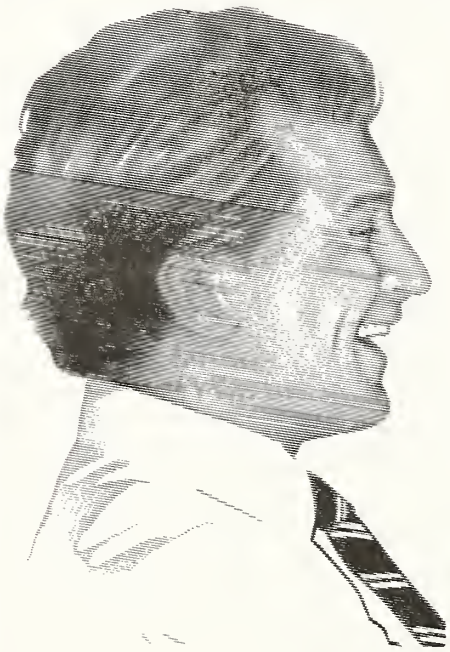
God is so near that it is a diaphanous relationship. There is a light shining through — it will never be extinguished.

The first astronauts reported that when they had penetrated outer space and as they looked out, everything seemed dark. A meteor passed by, and as they looked again with wonder, they found that the spaceship was bathed in light reflected from the meteor. It was there all the time, but it looked dark outside to them.

God has provided for the dark experiences in your life. He is not unconcerned on some distant star or planet trillions of miles away, for the angels of God are at your service. There is nothing more than a thin separation through which His love and presence is always shining through.

A past editor of the Advent Christian Witness, *Raymond Beecroft continues to be active in service with Vernon Advent Christian Home in Vernon, Vermont.* □

Growing in Christ...



The New Christian's Second Step

S.D. Teddler

I remember that time years ago, when I first came to when I first came to Christ. The Holy Spirit led me down the aisle to the altar that night, and I knew what I needed to do. But the next few days were much more confusing. I began to doubt my salvation, and I hungered for reassurance and direction. Each time I asked what I should do, I was told that all I needed was "to grow in the Lord." I began to stumble through the Scriptures, faithfully attend church, and wait for this growth I was sure would come. The growth did come, years later, in another Christian family, with some solid opportunities to learn what God wanted for me.

Now, as I see people give their lives to Christ, I remember the things I needed, and I try to help them along. It is the responsibility of every mature Christian to reach out to those who are seeking, and share with them the second step in the joy of our Salvation—how to grow in the Lord.

The mind of the new Christian

Accepting Jesus, and the fullness of God's grace is mind-boggling. Even now, the awareness of the great love that was manifested on the Cross causes me to stand in awe. For the new Christian, this feeling is much more intense. We all come to Christ broken under the burden of our sin, and it is hard for us to believe that anyone could love us that much. Though our hearts know we are saved, our minds try to convince us that we are not.

Grace is a difficult concept in a world where it is impossible to get something for nothing. The new Christian needs that reassuring word, both from us, and from the Scriptures. The doubts and fears of those early days must be banished. As flowers in a garden, we can only grow if we are firmly planted.

There are many questions that we all come upon during our walk with the Lord, and the first place that we look is usually to the Bible. My first attempt at satisfying the need I had for more knowledge of God's Word was extremely discouraging. I enthusiastically began reading the Bible with Genesis, and needless to say, by the time I got to Numbers, I was more confused than I had been before I started. The new Christian needs to study the Word, but they need to do it in a directed and organized way. With a new life in Christ comes a new perspective on life in this world, and coping with the change, and the questions can become overwhelming. We need to help those young in the faith to get it all sorted out.

Renewal brings excitement to our church and to our personal lives. When we make a change in our behavior, and approach life from a new direction, we emit an energy to those around us. This

energy from a new Christian, often appears as a driving desire to do something in the church. It is important to quickly assimilate the brother or sister into the life and activity of the church, but we must remember that they are, in essence, still babies, and regulate their involvement according to their growth.

What is it that we can do?

As mature Christians, we should spend time with the newest members of our family, simply being an available friend. They need from us a sense of stability, and the evidence of the new hope that they have. Answer questions when they come up. Share books with them so that they can begin searching on their own. Reassure them that the things they are feeling, and the fears they might have are normal, and that they will pass away. Be a listening ear and a loving hug when you need to be.

Remember that the most obvious evidence of Christ in our lives is the way that we live and interact with others. To be an effective witness of the changing power of Jesus Christ, we must live our faith day by day—walk in it continually, and not just talk about it. As the new Christian grows, they will seek in us the evidence of our life in Christ. Make sure that they are seeing the faithful love and devotion that they need to see.

Offer to spend time with a new Christian studying the Word together. Suggest study books and groups that they might be able to benefit from. Go with them, because we need to grow in the Lord, too. Get your congregation excited about the study of the Scriptures, and watch the changes that will take place in all of you!

Watch the new Christian as they display natural gifts and talents within the body to see where they might consider beginning their service to God in the church. Encourage them and assure them as they grow and discover and share all the things that God is doing in them. Don't be afraid to ask them to help out in service, or on some committee. Give them a chance to expend that energy, and to be fully developed disciples of our Lord Jesus.

Take every opportunity to serve new Christians. There is the chance for us to have continual renewal of that excitement we first felt when we, ourselves, were in their place. Rejoice together, and help each other to grow in the Lord. □

S.D. Teddler is a native of Rock Hill, South Carolina, and currently works as a computer software engineer in Forth Worth, Texas.

The Tennessee War Horse

A. Cameron Ainsworth

The Tennessee War Horse—that was the nickname given to A.J. Sanderlin by his friends and admirers. Perhaps his story will tell you why.

Sanderlin was born on January 27, 1853 near Brownsville, Tennessee. He was raised as a slave until some time after the Emancipation Proclamation of 1863. Details of his early life are not available, but Sanderlin overcame many obstacles to become a successful farmer and a thoroughly self-educated man. He learned, and would later teach, such subjects as French, German, Latin, Greek, astronomy, physics, algebra, geometry, language, bookkeeping, shorthand, and typing. Sanderlin also studied law and worked as a practicing lawyer and justice of the peace.

A.J. Sanderlin meets Jesus Christ

Sanderlin's great ambition and hard-earned education prepared him to accomplish amazing things in his lifetime, but it was something else that determined the direction his life would take—he met Jesus as his Savior. Studying the Bible with the same earnestness that he had brought to all of his other studies, Sanderlin soon taught others the Bible and became a minister with the Disciples of Christ.

After preaching for a few years, he one day came upon some tracts which contained the teachings of the Advent Christian Church. What he read excited him. He checked his Bible to see if the teachings were really there. He found through this study answers to some of the questions that had puzzled him. He soon joined the Advent Christian Church and began to preach and teach these things.

As a preacher of the Gospel, A.J. Sanderlin had a great love both for his God and for his people who were still suffering oppression and most of whom were living in poverty. In a report sent to the Advent Christian magazine *Our Hope* (October 5, 1910) he wrote, "I am trying to lift my people up to ideal Christianity and higher living. I want them to be filled with the Spirit of God, and see that there is a reality in Christianity, rather than so much 'churchianity.' " "All the people need," he wrote, "is more of God's grace in their hearts, and to be filled with the Holy Spirit, and then build up and develop their country."

This great burden to reach fellow blacks with the message of life in Christ led Sanderlin to travel miles on horseback preaching and organizing churches in Tennessee, Mississippi, Arkansas, Alabama, and Louisiana. God blessed his efforts. He organized an Advent Christian conference which included fifteen churches and twenty-one ordained ministers. He rejoiced in working with these churches he planted and ministers he trained.

No hardship was too great for Sanderlin if he could win more of his people for Christ. Having been a slave he had good reason to hate those who had been his oppressors. But Sanderlin loved white people too. Many white faces looked up at him from the congregations when he preached. He knew that he must share the Gospel with all people wherever he had the opportunity.

Living a message of hope and love

Like many other people of God, Sanderlin was not content just to preach the Gospel. He lived out the message of love which he preached. On his farm he provided work for some, and in his little log home he shared what he had with homeless children. His wife, Julia, always seemed to find room for one more child in their home.

One day an idea gripped Sanderlin and would not let him go—a school! God wanted him to organize a school where black young people could get a good education, learn a trade and, most important of all, really get to know God's Word.

Without giving up his work as an evangelist and church planter, Sanderlin began to develop his school. At first the school consisted of only seven students whom he taught in his cabin. Sanderlin's vision of a school was from God and the school grew. From seven students in 1899 the school grew until it had an enrollment of forty students in 1901. By 1911 the school enrolled eighty students, and in 1913 grew to one hundred twenty students housed in three buildings. Sanderlin's efforts at raising money for operating the school, building its plant, and establishing a library took up much of his time. These were hard times financially—especially for black people. He did not grow discouraged, but continued his fund-raising efforts finding some money in Tennessee and receiving some money, books, and

clothes from Advent Christian churches and people around the country.

The depth of commitment

The depth of Sanderlin's commitment is seen in the open letters which he wrote to *Our Hope* magazine. "I have no means of my own now. I have spent all I had on our school at White, Tennessee. I am in such a condition now that I will be forced to go to manual labor in the fall to make something to support my family, if things do not change. My whole heart is in the work. I am praying and trusting the Lord for results. I must open our school the first Monday in October, but oh, how I long to stay in the field and preach the Word."

Another time he wrote, "Permit me to say further, this is the tenth year that I have been running the school without any salary. I have not made a dollar in the ten years, in the school. You may ask the question, how do you live? I answer, I farm every year. I make a crop, and what I clear above my debts, I give to the Lord's cause. I am now at the place where I am obliged to ask aid of my readers."

The remarkable sacrifice which Sanderlin and his wife made was noted in *Our Hope* magazine (July 20, 1910), "He has toiled and spent his little all in this work, teaching many years without salary, when he might be making money in the practice of his profession as a lawyer among his people."

Much of Sanderlin's life was of necessity given to the financial struggle of keeping his school going. The middle of a glowing tribute paid him in a local newspaper upon his death read, "Many years ago he

Continued on page 22

Memphis on the Move

Harold Patterson

Memphis, Tennessee remains a mission field. Urban Memphis like many of our large cities has an inner-city area where crowded living conditions, poverty, high unemployment, illiteracy, and high crime make for a needy situation. In other words, it is a place that desperately needs the positive life-changing witness of Jesus Christ.

Our missionaries in Memphis are missionaries in the true sense of the word, having left Uganda and accepted our invitation to minister to inner-city Memphis. Francis and Lyne Ssebikindu exemplify those qualities that make good missionaries. They are deeply committed to Christ, concerned about the lost, sacrificial in giving, and hard-working. Their ministry is bearing fruit for time and eternity.

The Ssebikindus could well say with the Apostle Paul, "I have in short become all things to all men that I might by all means; at all costs and in any and every way; save some by winning them to faith in Jesus Christ" (1 Corinthians 9:22b). This thought states, "all things to all men for the purpose of winning people to Jesus Christ." This is a statement that reflects the varied, vital, and victorious ministry being carried on in Memphis today.

A ministry to spiritual and physical needs

In the year that Francis and Lyne have ministered in Memphis, average attendance has doubled into the sixties with highs of almost one hundred. There was a revival last fall that saw 20 people find Jesus Christ as Savior. Decisions continue to be reported in Memphis. Perhaps unreflected in the average statistics are the increasing number of people and families that are part of the growing ministry in Memphis.

Our Memphis church ministers in the giving of food stuffs to people who do not have enough to eat. Through their own sacrificial giving to the church plus through the gifts of food and money from other places, food is regularly distributed to those in need.

With many large families being ministered to, clothing is a very special need. The church operates a center where used clothing is given away to those needing them. When I was there, I was deeply touched when I was told there was a young lady that would come to church with her family if she only had a decent dress to wear to church. This is a strong belief among those we minister to there that in order to come to church they want to come looking as nice as they can for the glory of God. It is a wonderful attribute that we want to encourage.

Many children need tutoring and help in school. Francis gives some of his time along with others to help these young people who desire to learn.

One of the exciting ministries of the work is with youth. Each week, thirty to forty young people meet for Bible study and recreational activities. Throughout the year, many special youth activities are held including some trips to other places as well as recreational times to reach out to troubled young people with the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Bible studies are regularly conducted in the parsonage as well as other homes and new Bible studies are planned as new outreach ministries.

Speaking of outreach, the diversified ministry performed by the Ssebikindus includes contacts at

Continued on page 22

an interview with Francis Ssebikindu

From Uganda with God's Love

Francis, you nearly lost your life at the hands of Ugandan dictator Idi Amin's soldiers. Could you describe what happened?

Idi Amin came to power in 1971 through a military coup. His first two years were quite peaceful and everyone thought they were the best years of Ugandan independence. After that things began to turn around and Uganda became a different nation. Missionaries were expelled; Israelis were expelled; Indians, most of whom were born in Uganda, were expelled.

After he expelled all those people Amin had to find another excuse to complete his program, because Muammar Qudaffi, the Libyan dictator whom many of you know about, claimed Uganda to be an Islamic state, because Idi Amin was a Moslem.

They tried to complete their program by eradicating Christian influence. All churches which did not operate according to the government's program or heed their warnings were invaded. Our church, The Redeemer Church of Christ, was one of them. They sent an army of one hundred men to invade our church and randomly shot and harrass our people. Several times this happened. At least three times, as I preached, soldiers pointed a gun right at my head. God scared them away for some reason.

One time they found me at home, beat me, and left me for dead. I was found bleeding the next day and taken to the hospital. I remained in Uganda for almost a year after that incident and the church had to go underground. I continued to operate underground until I found any opening to flee and eventually I came to the United States.

Francis, you attended Berkshire Christian College. How did God lead you there to attend school?

When I came to the United States I didn't know anybody except a friend who was the senior pastor of our church. He had managed to escape and was invited to the United States by Westminster Theological Seminary in Philadelphia, and there he was given sanctum. So when I came to the United States, I had not yet had a college education and we were seeking what God wanted to do in our lives. At Westminster there was another student who was a graduate of Berkshire Christian College; Michael Kennedy. Michael expressed interest in us, our predicament, and our future. He realized the potential through our experiences but that we should be fully trained, so he approached the academic dean of Berkshire Christian College, Dr. David A. Dean on our behalf.

Dr. Dean invited me to Berkshire Christian College for a visit to see if I was capable of attending college, because I didn't have any papers to show them my educational level. Through God's leading, I was able to meet with Dr. Dean and President Vincent Taber. Both felt that even though I didn't have the documents or educational papers, that I would be able to do college work. So, I was admitted to Berkshire Christian College.

Was the tuition free or did you have to pay for that?

They offered me a tuition free scholarship, because they knew I didn't have the necessary funds. In the beginning I didn't stay on campus, but because I wanted to learn about life in America and participate in campus life with

other students, I decided to work for my room and board and move on campus. Being involved in college life was an important part of my education at Berkshire.

Could you share with our readers how you became a follower of Jesus Christ?

My family is quite diverse. My mother is a Moslem and when I was growing up I used to help her during Moslem fasting months.

My grandfather was a converted Protestant from Catholicism. He became headmaster of a missionary school, but really didn't live a Christian life. Because of our family diversity, there was no real structured religion or lifestyle to follow in our home. We were usually sent to a Sunday school and there were told stories from the Bible.

For a number of years, through primary and junior high school, I didn't attend church. When I came to high school, I attended a private school run by Hindus.

But something happened there. In the 10th grade, I developed an interest in the Bible. Some Bibles stories I had read earlier in life popped into the back of my mind. For some reason I started reading a Bible my mother had bought me a few years earlier.

I then went to some of my friends in school who were black Ugandans and expressed a desire to study the Bible so that we could get an easy grade on the final exam that every 12th grader has to take. I thought that "Bible Knowledge" (which is what the class is called) would be the easiest to do because I was capable of remembering facts from the Bible.

So, I went to my Hindu principal and requested that a group of us needed to study the Bible, and we needed his permission. I was the "class perfect." To be a "class perfect" you had to show good leadership and responsibility. He granted that permission, but he said he wasn't going to offer us an instructor, because he didn't have one.

I set out to find an instructor to teach us Bible and through His grace, God lead me to a devout Christian young man; an evangelical in the way that he witnessed and shared his faith. I expressed my need and Brother John Santamu agreed to be our instructor. It was through this contact that God began to make my life ready for the change, and through that relationship I finally gave my life to Christ in 1968.

When did you sense God calling you to Christian work?

John Santamu was part of a group of Christian young people. As you know, Uganda experienced a great revival movement in 1948. But when I was growing up, Christianity was perceived as being for the old people. But in the 60s a new spirit came, and we realized that Christian faith in Uganda wasn't just for the old people but for young people too.

This group of young men and women dedicated their lives to reaching out to young people. The vitality, boldness, and enthusiasm of that group became a catalyst for my life. And to tell you the truth, from that moment in 1968, I became a part of that arm of outreach for Christ, and I have never slacked off. When I graduated from high school I was already a witness and I knew that ministry for the church was part of my life. Even before I left Uganda I was already a part of the ministerial staff of the Redeemed Church of Christ. We were non-paid, but we were part of the arm that spread the gospel to many in Uganda.

You are serving Advent Christian missions in Memphis, Tennessee. What made you decide to go to Memphis?

I had just finished at Westminster, and God led me to a situation in Philadelphia where I worked in youth ministry. Brother Cameron Ainsworth called me and expressed that he was praying hard and seeking God's leading in his situation in Memphis. He was seeking God to find someone who would fit in the environment in Memphis. I didn't know if I was the man to fit in the environment in Memphis, but expressed a need to seek God's will in the situation. The decision wasn't hasty, because I have a family to consider. My wife, Lynne, and I began to pray and to seek God as to exactly what he would want us to do.

Then we began to ask God if He wanted us to break that relationship in Philadelphia and come to Memphis. Finally we found a peace of mind about the whole question, and we contacted Brother Ainsworth who was also praying to find whether he was comfortable with his move to where God was calling

Continued on next page

him. So between our praying and Brother Cameron praying and the church, the people here at Memphis praying, we all became content that God was calling us here to Memphis. All of us felt comfortable about it.

What goals and dreams do you have for the Memphis' work?

Memphis is a different culture and the work is hard to explain to people used to a different kind of environment. My primary goal is evangelism. Evangelism is our outreach to spread the word of God, to spread the life of Christ, which we are doing. My ongoing goal is evangelism. I have also found that there is a need for education. What I mean by education is teaching of the Bible so Christians will have more of a grasp of what the Scriptures teach. We are doing that currently through Bible study, but in the long term we may have to develop a more systemized program, maybe a Bible institute. And again, at that Bible institute evangelism is going to be at the forefront.

We have a lot of young people in Memphis. The crime rate in Memphis is mind boggling. I feel that one of the impacts that we can make on this community is to work with young people. Therefore the youth work will be important to my ministry here in Memphis. I dream of seeing a youth outreach center or activity center born here in Memphis.

Now our buildings here currently can't hold many people. We don't have the room to do all the activities we want to do for our immediate community. So one of my dreams is to have a large facility, a multi-purpose building where we can have room to plan and involve people. We want to set up attractive programs to minister to kids off the street, helping them leave their street activities and come into a Christian environment.

I have a dream of a Christian cinema here in Memphis. Now all these things involve planning and finance, but my dream is that all these things will one day become a reality.

You have lived in the United States for several years, what is your impression of this country since you have lived here?

My wife's mother came to visit and we took her to the grocery store to buy food. She saw the groceries the people had on their carts and she just cried. In Uganda even to have a pound of beef is like luxury, they can't afford it. There is plenty here.

My impressions of the United States. I have run into many friendly people and I have been sustained by friends. I praise God for that because if it wasn't for the welcome of the people from here, I wouldn't be where I am today.

But I see much waste, as I said my mother-in-law cried when she saw how much food people can buy at one time. I know the United States shares a lot abroad, but then there are many people who don't share.

I think moving to Memphis has also taught me that even in the United States we have needy people. We can share with the outside world but then there are some hidden from our view right at our backyard. So that in our land of plenty there are a lot of people who are lacking, and those who have plenty have to turn their eyes on the people who are lacking, and see someone who is right next door so that they may be blessed by sharing with them.

Charity starts at home, begins at home and that is one of the impressions which I think the United States is somewhat lacking: Sharing with those who are closer to them than those who are far away and overseas.

From all the press accounts we read, your homeland of Uganda continues to be torn apart by civil war and strife, how do you view the future of Uganda?

I sometimes sit and cry. Since the ouster of Idi Amin, there have been at least four different governments and stability in Uganda is a dream from the past. We don't see stability forthcoming. There is more pessimism than hope. The present government, we thought would be good. Even people in Uganda thought that maybe at last things were going to be better.

Recently Libyan dictator Muammar Quadaffi visited Uganda, and he again declared Uganda an Islamic state. He ordered the president of Uganda to Islamize the whole country. Now the president is not a Moslem, but because the Libyan dictator supported his takeover, Quadaffi once again wants to make Uganda an Islamic state.

That won't be easy. Blood will continue to be shed. If what Muammar Quadaffi proclaimed becomes a reality, should I lose hope? No!

I think that God's hand hasn't left Uganda. You know that Uganda was one of the fastest growing countries as far as Christianity is concerned. At one point it was envi-

sioned as the missionary center of Africa. But there is still hope!

Could you tell us about your family? In what ways do they support you in your ministry?

My wife, Lynne, is a dedicated Christian woman. She loves the Lord and she loves to see people's lives change. She is a praying woman, she prays for the ministry. She laments with me when we need to lament.

My wife was also born in Uganda. She grew up as a Christian, she became a Christian at the age of six. It was through her conversion that her mother, two of her brothers, and another sister became Christians, and she is a tremendous asset to our ministry.

She expresses her faith freely, she doesn't compromise in any way. I have seen this even in the environment we are in. We have a lot of new Christians. In talking with them I can see the wisdom and the support and the knowledge of the Scriptures and the tenderness of her spirit. My father and my mother are still in Uganda, as I said my mother is a Moslem. She doesn't say I shouldn't be where I am even though she has different dreams for my life. The same goes for my father. They haven't discouraged me in any way from what I am doing. We are far apart from each other, but again I remember the few letters my father wrote to me. He said that if I am where God wants us to be, he's happy. I miss them, I don't know if they were closer to me whether or not my ministry would be different, but I know that they now realize that my call is for Christian ministry and that they don't try to obstruct it. □

Let's Have a Change!

Beryl Joy Hollis

Groups studying "Teachers of the Bible" enthusiastically and carefully.

I took one look at the program for the Annual Teachers' Retreat, and was glad I had been given a free hand as to the type of message I gave. There were five addresses on the six-hour programme, not including the vote of thanks at the end! So I decided we were going to have a change when my turn came!

Adapting questions from the biographical worksheet given in the Winter, 1985 issue of *Insight*, I had them duplicated in Tamil so everyone of the 150 participants could have a copy. It was a little noisy for a while when we broke the meeting up into groups, but each group soon settled down to study one "Teacher of the Bible."

The ten groups each had a different teacher — Moses, Joshua, Samuel, Ezra, Peter, Barnabas, Paul, Apollos, Timothy, Priscilla, and Aquila. (These last two could scarcely be separated!) Preferences were supplied. Pastors were invited to join any group if they were interested, but the leadership was given to Headmasters and Headmistresses. I told the pastors they were too likely to be tempted to give the answers themselves, whereas the idea of this session was to have a change from being "told" to doing the "telling" themselves.

About fifteen minutes before the end of the session, all came together again, and one person from each group was given approximately one minute to name their teacher, give a key verse which might have been the character's motto, and explain why their group had chosen this verse. Surprisingly, they kept closely to their time, each leader coming forward even before being called. It was obvious that this session had been interesting and stimulating.

Try it sometime! □

Apples of Gold

Harold Patterson

His Gift to Me by James Asa Johnson (Venture Books) is a collection of 172 poems taken from the many hundreds written by this Advent Christian poet. As another poet said long ago "A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver." Set against that backdrop, from the precious and "sterling' forty year ministry of Pastor Johnson are some fine "words of gold."

Choose at random, if you will, some of these "apples of gold" and you will taste the honey of a man's relationship with his God, the sweetness of a relationship between husband and wife for over fifty years, and the meaty flavor of a faith rich in the promises and power of God.

How many of us in Advent Christian ministry have used these poems and others from over four hundred tracts in verse in our sermons, especially our occasional sermons, funeral meditations, and newsletters. "Juices" of these apples have blessed many.

We often hear the question, "Where are the Advent Christian writers like we used to have?" Here is evidence that there are still those among us with this rich gift.

It is my hope that this might not be the final sharing of these verses. I commend this book to all as a way to share in your "quiet time" some of the richness that God has poured into the pen of James Asa Johnson.

Developing Godly Character in Christian Living

Everett Ransom

Pastor Swindoll is one of my favorite radio personalities, and in *A Quest for Character* (Multnomah Press) — his latest book — I am not disappointed. Here, in forty short chapters, are some of the best illustrations and devotional points I have read in a long time.

He starts with a tremendous story of a fight-for-life a young man had with a rattlesnake. Vividly he describes the battle which went down a mountainside, neither giving way to the other. At one point he felt the venom "running down the skin of his neck, the rattles making a furious racket." He finally choked the snake to death, then could not open his fingers to let go. The picture of a Christian's struggle with Satan is obvious, yet so pointed I had to read on.

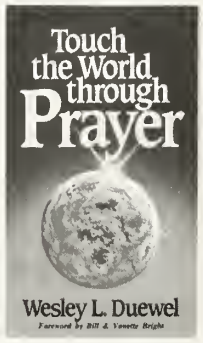
A Quest for Character is divided into two sections of twenty short chapters each. Part one entitled *Guard Your Heart* deals with personal things, such as doormats, sincerity, rigidity and parental negligence.

Part two, *Give Your Heart*, covers giving with gusto, risk taking, the gift that lives on, and gumption. Most of the chapters are unusually good. The reading is exciting and challenging. I lost interest only in a few places where the author simply talked without those tremendous illustrations. The book is intended as a devotional giftbook, published in hardcover at $12.95. Charles R. Swindoll is pastor of First Evangelical Free Church in Fullerton, California, radio pastor to thousands around the world, and author of many best-selling books on Christian living. I heartily recommend this book to all who want to get their personal life in deep with Christ and who want to be used of Him in daily service.

Everett Ransom pastors Beaver Creek Advent Christian Church near Ferguson, North Carolina.

Your Prayers Can Make a Difference

Harold Patterson



Touch the World Through Prayer by Wesley Duewell (Zondervan Press) was first given to me by one of our returning short-term missionaries with the comment, "This will bless your life!" I received it with interest but thought, "Oh well, another book on prayer." I started to read it and read it all the way through without putting it down. I rejoiced; I cried; I marveled; I agreed, but most of all *I prayed*. I then bought copies and gave them to others.

This book burns with the fire of one who has personally experienced the blessing and the results of prayer by and for him in his ministry.

The book contains thirty-four chapters with such intriguing titles as *God is Preparing a Harvest for You, You Can be Part of God's Emergency Network, Your Prayer*

Can Reap World Harvest, and *Prayer That Can Never be Lost.* These chapters will provide challenges, insight and motivation for your prayer life. Pastor Duewell writes, "God has a wonderful plan by which you can have world influence through your prayers." And also "God has planned that ordinary Christians like you and me can become mighty in prayer for the reaping of Christ; harvest among the nations today."

This book is preachable, inspirational, and filled with material for sermon illustrations (especially for mission sermons). It's good, sound teaching on the benefits of prayer. This book could well be used for a series of prayer meeting studies with the blessing to all who would share.

I would hope that every missionary, pastor, mission committee member, WHFM member and all intercessors would have this book in their library, and have it well used. It is indeed a gem written out of the full life of one who has been a missionary to India, and former president of OMS International. Get a copy!

Honoring God in our Worship

Renee L. Mayer

"Unfortunately, it seems that everything else but Sunday is the high point of our week: time in the garden, a shopping trip, concerts, vacation homes, high school sports, dinner out with friends, the doubles' tennis challenge, finishing the latest project, Sunday afternoon football on TV, jobs. We rarely begin to anticipate Sunday is coming! Sunday is coming! Sunday will be...Sunday will be! Rarely do we ask ourselves, "What can we do to make this coming Sunday the best of this week?"

So writes Karen Mains in *Making Sunday Special* (Word Books). She describes how her Sundays weren't the special times of worship and praise she hoped for. Activities and responsibilities crowded into Sunday, not giving her room to prepare for worship on the Lord's day. She tells how her Sunday mornings became a rat race of frustrations and interruptions.

Listen again to her words. "I used to think this Sunday morning commotion ("Mo-om! Randy won't let me in the bathroom." BANG! BANG! "Hurry up! I gotta get in there!") was due to the fact that we were a ministerial family and some unbidden demonic force attempted to steal our good intents toward adoration."

Striving to make Sundays special after many well-meaning attempts, she and her husband share an experience with friends in Jerusalem called the Jewish Sabbath Tradition. Preparations began on Thursdays and would progress to Sunday worship with a special awareness of the presence of God.

The author writes to Christian families who experience the hassles of preparing for worship on Sundays. That includes most of us. As characteristic of Karen Mains' style, she uses a lot of descriptive experiences to draw you into her story. There are times when I was bogged down with her descriptives. Yet this book is interesting and informative. A set of questions and exercises is included to give readers some specific help toward making their Sundays special times of worship. □

Renee Mayer is a student in communications at Wingate College and attends First Advent Christian Church in Charlotte, North Carolina.

Is Your God too Small **From pg. 7**

enlightment to those who still live in darkness.

And I say to you, if we will be servants of Christ we must be a follower of one who was himself a servant and a suffering servant. Christ said to Ananias, "I will show Paul what great things he must suffer for my sake." And a vision for our denomination, a vision of faithful servanthood in global evangelism must also lead us to be ready to suffer for Jesus' sake.

We cannot commit ourselves at one and the same time to the affluence of modern America and to following one who said the Son of man does not have a place to lay His head. We must learn to make sacrifices of prestige, of finances, of sons and daughters, and sacrifices of all that we are, to show we stand faithfully for Christ and bear true witness to his Lordship. That, it seems to me, is what our vision is—a denominational vision that Christ is our Lord and we will be his servants regardless of the costs. A worthy vision depends upon the reality of our denominational encounter with Jesus Christ. And a worthy vision will redirect us in many of the things that we actually do. And a worthy vision will lead us to sacrifice, and to persecution. And a worthy vision will so captivate us that we can finally say as Paul could finally say to King Agrippa, "I have not been disobedient to the heavenly vision." So the issue is before us as Advent Christian people. I have told you what I think our vision ought to be. But together you and I must decide what our vision is going to be. □

Advent Christian theologian Dr. David A. Dean is the author of Framing the Prophetic Puzzle *and* Resurrection: His and Ours.

Caroline Michael
Director

TRP Scheduling Continues

The requests for workshops by our Trained Resource Persons continue with the total being nearly seventy-five for this initial year of the TRP program.

WHFMS statistics show that we have approximately 3,000 women who are involved in just over 200 local groups. One of our national goals is to increase membership. As we do better planning for our monthly meetings and develop some new special interest groups to meet the more diverse needs of women today, we will attract more women.

Another way to increase our membership potential is to reach out to women in our community that are not churched. In some of your daily contacts at work, in your neighborhood, at PTA or garden club, at the grocery store, or at the beauty parlor, there may be one with whom you can share the life-changing message of salvation.

There are TRP workshops available to help you with each of the above suggestions. The first one is titled *Is Your Programming on Target?* Other topics include *Everyday Evangelism*, and *How to Develop a Special Interest Group*.

If your society has not yet experienced a workshop presentation by one of our TRPs, you may want to consider doing this in the near future. There is a request form in the current program kit which you may use and mail to the Department of Women's Ministries. We appreciate the time and effort expended by our TRPs and anticipate valuable results.

Ten of the Eastern Region TRPs at lunch

40th Convention of the Eastern Region WHFMS

The Maine Conference WHFMS planned the program with the theme verse from Proverbs 31:10, "Her value is far above rubies," and featuring a theme song by Phyllis Stinson. Gordon College students gave glimpses of life in South Africa, China, and Austria and Eric Rundgren showed slides of his experiences in Sweden. Alma Lampard read a history of the region written by Edith Palmer.

Barbara Shaeffner and Joanne Tompkins

Missionary Margaret Helms, on furlough from the Philippines, was the evening speaker sharing that more people in the Philippines are now open to the Gospel than ever before. She encouraged us to be "rubies" and to be faithful in "little" things. Pastor Harry Soucy of Loudon, NH led the morning devotions and communion service, and Marguerite Sylvester conducted a memorial service.

Eastern Region Superintendent Paul Johnson challenged the ladies to become daughters of encouragement as illustrated in the life of Barnabas. National Director of Women's Ministries Caroline Michael encouraged local groups to find ways to involve younger women and to be active in evangelism.

Barbara Schaeffner efficiently presided and Shirley Ross was chorister. The officers elected are: President Barbara Schaeffner, Vice-president Bea Moore, Secretary Alma Lampard, Treasurer Jane Sturdevant, and Auxiliary Superintendent Ellie Snell.

Introducing Beatrice Moore National WHFMS President

At the June convention of the Woman's Home and Foreign Mission Society, Bea Moore of Loudon, New Hampshire was elected president. She has served as Eastern Region WHFMS President and is currently the regional Vice-president, a TRP, Sunday school superintendent, a Bible study leader, and a deaconess.

Special interests include cats, quilting, her grandchildren, painting, and gardening. Bea is married to Wendell and they have four children and six grandchildren. Bea has taken an active part in raising poultry, Hereford cattle, and Suffolk sheep on their family farm.

During August Caroline Michael spent an afternoon with Bea and recorded the following brief interview.

When did you begin to take the Christian life seriously?

In my early teens, my pastor helped me see that because God had done so much for me, I owed Him something. From that point on I began to think what I wanted to do with my life. I knew I wanted to work for Him and He gave me a deep interest in missions.

Bea, what has challenged you most about being involved in WHFMS and ministries to women?

One of the things that has perhaps challenged me most is the fact that women have tremendous opportunities to be able to work for the Lord. Being in WHFMS has given me a vehicle in which to use the talents I have and it has also given me the opportunity to go many places and be involved in different

aspects of the Lord's work and share burdens and concerns, meet new women, and pray together.

What do you see as some of the most positive aspects of our denominational ministries to women at the present time?

I sense a growing awareness our women have of meeting the needs of other people — those around us as well as needs within our own churches — physical and emotional needs as well as spiritual ones. Helping in all these areas is our responsibility as Christian women.

In WHFMS today we're beginning to be aware that we cannot continue doing things in the traditional way. Times have changed, people have changed, circumstances have changed. If we're going to be able to minister to needs, we will need to change our approach, the way we think, our awareness, everything. We can't proceed the way we did fifty years ago.

We are recognizing the need for the pastor and the women to work together with mutual support. We can complement and build up each others' ministry and better serve the total ministry of the church.

I think we have excellent resources for our women's programs. Our program kits are valuable. We have excellent handbooks and brochures to help our women become better leaders.

The TRP training our women have been receiving is developing leadership. TRPs are being used to present workshops, to help recognize needs in local groups and how to meet those needs. I think it's an excellent program for training all kinds of women in our churches to serve. Women that have been outside the framework of WHFMS are being utilized and that's positive.

What other advantages for local groups of women do you see in the TRP program?

One workshop helps women develop thoughts and ideas to make a program interesting and vital. It demonstrates that a number of women may be involved in the development of a program and points up the value of making the program the central focus of the meeting.

Another workshop shows the need for witnessing to those around us in response to God's command and helps women develop natural ways to share Jesus with others. A third workshop helps women analyze the needs for a special interest group in their church and tells how to get the right group started. Other workshops will be developed in the future.

Thank you, Bea for your candid responses. □

CONNIE JONES
902 Hemlock Dr. NE, Lenoir, NC 28645

Stretching Spiritual Sinew

Recently some of our ladies at First Advent Christian Church, Lenoir, formed a support group to encourage the development of better health habits. Goals were set for diet and exercise. Soon we were walking, jogging, and bicycling our way to better physical fitness.

When we added up our total group mileage, it began to look and sound impressive. Blood pressures were checked by a nurse in the group and scales were purchased to determine our total weight loss or gain (oops). Many WHFMS groups are using similar programs to attract new members to their circles and to meet the felt needs of their present membership.

The Apostle Paul instructs us to treat our bodies as God's temple and to take proper care of them. He reminds us that we need to stretch our spiritual sinew also. In Ephesians 3:16 he prays that the early Christians would be "strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inner man." How is this done? How can we work with the Spirit in strengthening our innermost being? There are three major ingredients to the program — diet, exercise, and rest.

Diet

I've been learning a lot about diet since my parents came to live with me. Mother is a diabetic and must watch her sugar and carbohydrates. Dad's intake of sodium and potassium is greatly restricted as he is on renal dialysis. I find myself carefully scrutinizing labels in the grocery store to determine what is okay and what is a no-no.

Look at Hebrews 5:14. Wow! What a comparison! As we mature in our faith, our ability to choose and use spiritual nourishment develops. We learn to discern through practice what is good and healthy, and to avoid the no-no's that poison our system and warp our growth.

Let's examine our spiritual intake. Sometimes we are malnourished because we do not get spiritual food. Other times we overindulge in the world's fare and lose our appetite for good solid food. What do you hunger and thirst for? "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled."

Exercise

One enjoyable result of our support group is my daily hike. Another lady and I meet each afternoon for a two-mile walk. As we walk and talk our way around the course we share laughs, confessions, good advice, and spiritual insights. Indeed, sometimes we get so involved in our discussions that we fail to keep tract of how many laps we have travelled.

Prevention magazine describes walking as the number one all-purpose exercise. In his book to the Christians at Ephesus, Paul has a lot to say about walking. Take time to seek out the "walk" passages in Ephesians. Paul tells us to walk worthy of our vocation, to walk in love, and to walk as children of light. I like that! Don't you? Our spiritual walk with God so inspires us to be worthy that we deepen our fellowship with Him. His love pervades our hearts, and then we reflect Him as lights to our world.

The more we put into our walk with God, the more intimate our relationship with Him will grow. Our walk with God is a living testimony to those around us. Finally we are reminded to walk "circumspectly...redeeming the time...understanding what the will of the Lord is" (Ephesians 5:15-17). It is urgent that we exercise our faith by walking in obedience to His will for our time is limited, and the lost surround us.

Rest

Strenuous exercise must be followed by a time of rest. Rest restores us and strengthens us for the new day and its responsibilities. The Bible says, "Be still and know that I am God." If we are to be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might, then we must learn to draw from Him and to rely upon Him.

Do you really believe in God's power in your life? Having fortified ourselves with proper diet and having stretched the sinew of our faith in an active spiritual walk, we can rest assured that God will fulfill all His promises. We can safely entrust the results of our labor to Him. □

News & Notes

Seattle, Washington

The September meeting of the Seattle, Washington WHFMS featured Dr. Andrea Vangor, Executive Director of Washington Together Against Pornography, who is a dynamic leader in the fight against pornography. She discussed the threat this evil influence plays in the lives of children. She asserted that no child is exempt from those who violate Christian values in the creation and publication of sordid printed and filmed pornographic materials. On the second Tuesday of every month, members of the Seattle WHFMS gather for the day to make quilts that are used in refugee camps in many places in the world. These quilts are distributed by World Concern.

Sumas, Washington

The fall rally of the Western Washington WHFMS was held in the Sumas Advent Christian Church. Hal and Dorothy Reeves, former Jehovah Witnesses, shared their testimony of how they became born-again Christians.

Camp Ohio

Linda Baker was the guest speaker for the annual Ohio WHFMS Conference meeting. She affirmed our specialness to God and stressed the need to be obedient and to concentrate on our strengths.

Betty Bockover presided and shared some devotional thoughts. The Conference WHFMS paid for a freezer for Camp. Helen Sims will arrange for a Trained Resource Person presentation for the Ohio WHFM societies in Columbus in the spring. The following officers will be serving: President Betty Bockover, Vice-president Oma Rutan, Secretary Janet Cunningham, and Treasurer Gloria Vermillion.

Connecticut WHFMS

Conference President Ann Ball was the guest speaker for Bristol and Plainville WHFMS "ladies night out" at the Sophia Room. The Conference WHFMS met for Mission Day at Camp Plainville beginning with a picnic lunch. Mary Waliger thrilled the group with her message including the trials and blessings her family experienced in Russia. World Mission Director Harold Patterson gave an update on our mission activities including the beginning of ministry in Mexico. Music was provided by Becky Leach and Sue Searles.

Mission Prayer Partnership

November

19 **Praise** the Lord for the many inquiries from people who are interested in proclaiming Christ.

20 **Pray** for the **Memphis** work. May the promises found in Malachi 3:10 be manifested.

21 **Praise** God for the donation of fifty Spanish Bibles for **Mexico.**

22 **Pray** for the success of Hunger Sunday.

23 **Pray** for **Marion Damon.** Believe that the Spirit of truth abides in her and leads her into all truth.

24 **Praise** God for **Alice Brown** who bubbles with enthusiasm while radiating God's wisdom.

25 **Pray** for the home mission work in **Southern Maine.**

26 **Stand in faith** with **B.J.Hollis** who desires to see His authority over spiritual wickedness in high places.

27 **Praise** God for the two new Bible studies in **Nigeria.**

28 **Praise** God for the **Jewetts** who are tearing down walls to make room for the people who attend their services.

29 **Pray** for **Margaret Helms** that she would have wisdom in leading others to the fact that we have one task only—saving souls.

30 **Praise** God for a service in **Malaysia** where former witches were delivered from darkness.

December

1 **Pray** for the comfort of the Holy Spirit as the Body of Christ prepares for **His birthday.**

2 **Praise** God for **Floyd and Musa Powers** for they are doers of the word and are blessed.

3 **Praise** God for **David Vignali**'s righteousness and temperance.

Prayer Partnership

4 Pray for **E.A. Akpan** to be strengthened to perform the Father's task—win Nigeria to Christ.

5 Join your **faith** with **Pastor T. Devairakkam** who calls God, "Jehovah-Jirah" our provider.

6 Pray for God's power to come forth during our Advent Christian national **radio** broadcast.

7 Pray for **Barbara White.** Have faith that God would supply all her needs according to His riches in glory.

8 Pray for more workers who will labour with the **Warriners** for the Lord.

9 Pray for continued health and strength for our **retired missionaries.**

10 Praise God for the many who were saved, healed, and baptized at **Pastor L. Devasahayam's church.**

11 Pray the will of the Lord in the lives of our **servicemen** and our **Advent Christian Chaplains.**

12 Praise the Lord for a successful **Penny Crusade.** May the Lord take pleasure in your prosperity.

13 Pray with **Bob Cole,** Finance Director, Colossians 3:15.

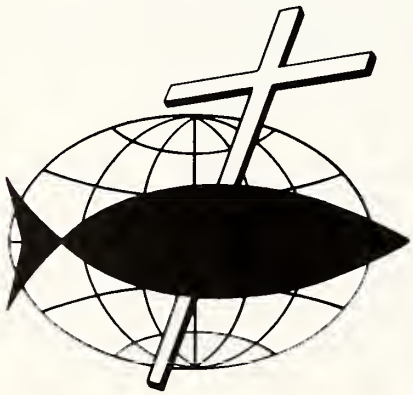
14 Pray for the **national pastors,** that their churches will witness to the unsaved the glory of the Lord.

15 Pray for the political situation in the **Philippines** where our beloved missionaries are.

16 Pray for God's anointing on **B.J. Hollis** on this her birthday.

17 Pray for an increasing desire to join others in **evangelizing** the world.

18 Pray for the reading of a splendid mission book **The Passion of Souls** by Oswald J. Smith.



The Tennessee War Horse **From pg. 11**

founded the Sanderlin Academy for Negro students at White Station... When he died yesterday the property was free from all encumbrances." Perhaps the best memorial to him were his words "Brethren and sisters, we are still striving for the upbuilding of the cause and fallen humanity, and the writer has been in the cause of Christ for thirty or more years, and has been in the Advent Christian church twenty-seven years and fighting against sin and ignorance, and I am not tired of the good and true cause. Yours in the faith, waiting for the coming kingdom, A.J. Sanderlin." □

A. Cameron Ainsworth pastors the Riverside Advent Christian Church in Fort Worth, Texas.

Memphis on the Move **From pg. 11**

Memphis State University with international students, and a vital, dynamic prison ministry with over thirty men in attendance, some of who are praying that God would see fit to grant them an early parole so that they might prepare for the ministry. Francis has been invited to speak and to counsel in a Junior High and a Senior High School. Other schools in the area appear to be opening up for this unusual but needed ministry.

All this involves time and transportation. We have in Memphis a van and an old bus both of which have frequently broken down and need repairs. This brings frustration when breakdowns occur when a bus full of enthusiastic and impatient youngsters are aboard.

The needs and the vision in Memphis are equally as great. There is a need for musicians and those who could lead in music. Music is an important part of life in a black community. We pray for the strengthening of our music ministry. The Ssebikindus are praying for the possibility of a community center where many services could be offered to people in these deprived communities to encourage them to develop their personal life and for a chance to share Jesus Christ.

The Ssebikindus have found, what many others have found who minister in the urban scene, that the hours are long, the work is hard, but the rewards are great and eternal. Pray for them in the work in Memphis.

It is the desire of the Department of World Missions to see other ministries and to see other projects like Memphis begun in the cities of America. Advent Christians need to be involved in urban outreaches. Pray that God would open the right "doors" and raise up for us, men and women who would be willing to make a commitment to missionary service in the inner city. □

The Right to Lie

Two years ago the Supreme Court heard unusual oral arguments in the case of convicted murderer Emmanuel Charles Whiteside, who contends his lawyer should have allowed him to lie in court.

Though the issues the case raises are complex, the facts are not: In February 1977, Whiteside fatally stabbed one Calvin Love. He told his attorney, Gary Robinson, that he did not see a weapon but "believed" Love had one.

Then just before his trial, Whiteside informed Robinson that he would testify he had seen something "metallic." "If I don't say I saw a gun, I'm dead," he explained. Robinson warned him that false testimony would be perjury, and if Whiteside gave it, Robinson would be forced to withdraw from the case, and possibly testify against him.

As Whiteside now argues, he had no choice: He testified truthfully and was convicted.

Iowa courts threw out Whiteside's appeal that Robinson had denied him "effective representation." But a federal court found that attorney Robinson "impermissibly compromised" Whiteside's constitutional rights by "restricting" his testimony.

So Whiteside's *right*—in this case, to lie—was upheld over his lawyer's legal and moral *responsibility* to the judicial system. It is this conflict which the Supreme Court must now resolve—and in the process, perhaps, establish a constitutional "right" to lie.

The protection of individual rights—called "inalienable" in the Declaration of Independence—is a cherished tradition of American democracy, and its chief bulwark against tyranny.

Rights do not exist in a vacuum, however; they beget corresponding responsibilities. The right of citizenship, for example, creates such responsibilities as taxes, jury duty and service in the common defense. Democracy demands that this crucial balance be maintained.

But in America today the scales are tipping. We have come to regard the benefits of freedom as rights which are unencumbered by responsibility. And in our permissive society, just about anything anybody wants to do can be justified by calling it a right.

This obsession with rights has affected every area of life. Consider some recent examples:

- On "Good Morning America" recently, Susan Baker, co-founder of a campaign to put warning labels on offensive rock music, cited records extolling everything from incest to satanic worship. A music critic glibly dismissed her concerns, shrugging, "You can't repeal the culture." The lead singer of a popular rock group added, "It's really an issue of rights. As a song writer, I have a right to express myself."

It may not be fashionable to say this nowadays, but the First Amendment is not a blank check. As Oliver Wendell Holmes wrote, the right of free speech does not extend to shouting "Fire!" in a crowded theater. Nor does it include polluting the minds of a generation of young Americans.

- In the recent drug cases involving professional athletes, many columnists have defended the offenders on grounds that what they snort or smoke in private is their personal right. What about their responsibility to millions of young people for whom they are heroes and role models?
- A few years ago, government assistance programs were called "grants" or "aid," that is, benefits the government chose to incur. Today, however, they are "entitlements," which Webster defines as a "right to demand or expect." And a budget full of demanded rights cannot be cut—thus we are facing a $200 billion federal budget deficit.
- A variety of special interest groups disguise their goals as rights. Thus, homosexuals contend not only for tolerance but for "gay rights." While it is wrong to discriminate, it would also be wrong to confer special civil rights for those engaging in immoral behavior.
- If there is one inalienable right, it is the right to life; but note how cleverly pro-abortion forces have stolen the terminology with their claim of a woman's right to control her own body!

The lie is everywhere. It is as if by simply labelling something as a right, one is relieved of the moral consequences of one's actions.

The rebuttal, of course, should come from the church. The balance of rights with responsibilities is firmly rooted in Scripture. In ancient Israel, the right to harvest private crops carried with it a responsibility to leave gleanings for the poor. God's blessings were always coupled with commandments to care for others less fortunate; Jesus affirmed that to whom much is given, much is required.

But can we Christians expose this lie, or are we riddled with it ourselves? Much of our TV preaching and literature proclaims only the rights of being God's children: health, happiness, success, prosperity. The focus is on blessings rather than sacrifice, the rights of the kingdom without reference to our responsibilities to the King.

As Christians enjoying freedoms known few other places in the world, we have a special call to speak a sobering word: Rights divorced from responsibilities are the seeds of destruction. Maybe the Iowa "right to lie" case, preposterous though it seems, will serve a worthy purpose if it jars us awake.

Edmund Burke, the 18th century British statesman, summed it up well: "Liberty without wisdom or responsibility...[is]...the greatest of all possible evils." □

Your Servants for Christ's Cause

International Missionaries

Philippines

Alice Brown (March 24)
Box 223
Cagayan de Oro City 8401
PHILIPPINES

Margaret Helms (September 18)
P.O. Box 263
Cebu City 6401
PHILIPPINES

Frank and Judy Jewett
(December 11 and January 29)
Danny Jewett (June 13, 1976)
Timmy Jewett (June 26, 1978)
Letitia Jewett (April 13, 1980)
P.O. Box 263
Cebu City 6401
PHILIPPINES

David Vignali (May 10)
P.O. Box 263
Cebu City 6401
PHILIPPINES

Japan

Floyd and Musa Powers
(October 8 and February 28)
Rebecca Powers (Nov. 11, 1971)
18 - 11- 4 Motoyama Kita cho
Higashinada ku, Kobe shi 658
JAPAN

Austin and Dorothy Warriner
(January 1 and January 18)
3-37 Okayama Higashi
5 Chome; Osaka Fu 575
JAPAN

India

Marion Damon (March 27)
Box 17, Andivilla
Kodaikanal 624101
INDIA

Beryl Joy Hollis (December 16)
American Advent Mission
Velacheri, Madras 600 042
INDIA

Barbara White (January 14)
Box 17, Andivilla
Kodaikanal 624101
INDIA

National Missionaries

Malaysia

Thambusamy and
Victoria Devairakkam
3A, Jalan Sayang Housing Trust
86000 Kluang, Johor
MALAYSIA

Lucas and Beulah Devasahayam
30, Jalan Cempaka
Taman Gembira
[illegible] Banting, Selangor
[illegible]YSIA

Memphis

Francis and Lyne Ssebikindu
(May 13 and May 8)
Faith Nancy (September 28, 1982)
Ashley Grace (January 21, 1985)
2590 Faxon Avenue
Memphis, TN 38112

Mexico

Abel Garcia
618 "E" Street Suite "E"
Chula Vista, CA 92010

Alberto Gomez
Arthuro Angelo
Ever Perez
c/o Abel Garcia

Nigeria

E. A. Akpan—Superintendent
Nigerian Advent Christian Mission
Ediene Ikot Obio Imo,
P.O. Box 1642
Uyo; NIGERIA

Advent Christian General Conference
P.O. Box 23152
Charlotte, NC 28212

[illegible]ld Patterson; World Missions
[illegible] Griswold; Christian Education
[illegible]line Michael; Women's Ministries
Roland Griswold; Church Expansion
Robert W. Cole; Finance
Robert Mayer; Publications
David Northup; Executive Vice-president

3
AC04343
University of North Carolina
Serials Dept. Davis Library
080 A
Chapel Hill, NC 27514

C286.4
A24

Advent Christian WITNESS

December 1987

Christmas Miracle

page four

Member
epa
Evangelical Press Association

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
Robert J. Mayer

MISSIONS
Harold Patterson

WHFMS
Caroline M. Michael

GRAPHIC ARTS
Linda Perault

TYPESETTING
Susan Gettis

EFMA MEMBER MISSION

EVANGELICAL COUNCIL FOR FINANCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY ECFA MEMBER
The symbol of trust

The Advent Christian Witness is published monthly, except for a combined July-August issue, 11 times a year by the Advent Christian General Conference; 14601 Albemarle Road; P.O. Box 23152; Charlotte, North Carolina 28212. Total Copies: 4,300. Paid or requested circulation: none. Mail Subscription: 3,987. Total paid or requested circulation: 3,987. Free distribution by mail: None. Copies not distributed: 313. Total: 4,300.

Policy: As the official publication of the Advent Christian General Conference of America, the *Advent Christian Witness* publishes the teachings of the Advent Christian Church and promotes the task of evangelism both in North America and throughout the world.

Rates in the U.S. and Canada: one year, $11.00. Single Copy, $1.00. Overseas one year, $14.00.

All articles and materials are copyright ©1987 by the Advent Christian General Conference unless otherwise indicated. Permission to reprint available upon request. The views expressed in this magazine are those of the author and may not necessarily reflect those of the editor or the Advent Christian General Conference.

from the editor

Fighting the Political Illusion

October 19, 1987. The New York Stock Exchange suffers its worst trading day ever. Investors panic over record trade deficits, possibilities of war with Iran, the inability of the United States government to live within its means, and a host of other issues and concerns.

As I watched news coverage of the Stock Market, the assertions of a Florida stockbroker rang true. "The Stock Market," he declared, "runs by two emotions: fear and greed!" Whichever emotion is strongest governs the direction of the market.

Those emotions also govern how many Americans view government, economics, and international affairs. During the last fifty years, we've expected government to provide Social security, education benefits, farm subsidies, military preparedness, weather forecasting, road building, and numerous other services and entitlements. Any rumor or hint that those services might be interrupted causes us to view the future with fear and alarm.

Add technology to the increased role of government and we're ripe for seduction by what French philosopher Jacques Ellul calls *The Political Illusion*. Charles Colson summarizes the Political Illusion in one concise sentence, "Mastery of nature through technology has given modern man the illusion that he has mastered life itself." In other words, we think that all of our problems can be solved by government, by technology, or by some combination of both.

That message is foreign to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. To again use Colson's words, "The message of the Kingdom (of God) is that only God is master of life and attempts to create alternatives to His rule are futile." The stock market may crash, the government may go broke, new technology may fail but Jesus Christ remains Lord.

God calls us to participate fully in society. Stock markets, technology, and governments are crucial to our well being. But they exist at the pleasure of God. As our society wrestles with economic uncertainty, Christians know that God is sovereign and that He controls our planet's destiny. □

Volume 35 Number 11

Advent Christian WITNESS

December 1987

FEATURES

Christmas Miracle Lloyd Mattson 4
One Christmas season, God broke through in a young man's life and healed his broken marriage relationship.

The Greatest Gift of All Ann Lay 8
God's love is the best gift we can experience at this Christmas season.

A Door to Korea Floyd Powers 10
God opens the way for Advent Christian missionary Floyd Powers to visit and preach in South Korea.

My Best Christmas Ever Arthur Stone 12
Pastor Art Stone and his family experienced a serious auto accident while traveling to visit relatives at Christmas. He shares how God made that his best Christmas ever.

Shouldn't Christmas Be for Everyone? Harold Patterson 14
Five Biblical truths about the birth of Christ that remind us of the need for World Missions.

U.N.C. LIBRARY
DEC 14 1987
SERIALS

ON THE COVER

Christmas 1987. With joy and thanksgiving, Christians throughout the world celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ.

DEPARTMENTS

From the Editor 2

Review 16

Women's Ministries 18

Prayer Partnership 21

Opinion 22

CHRISTMAS MIRACLE

Lloyd Mattson

Harry was a good looking man, especially in his uniform. A quiet grin, easy manner and dry wit, it wasn't hard for Karen to fall in love with him. Nor him with her, for Karen was lovely in every way. The trouble was, Karen was a Christian, while Harry was only a churchman.

Wise friends warned her, but Karen was sure Harry would make a good husband and someday turn to the Lord. He came from such a fine family. They married while Harry was still in the service.

Their times together were fun, but Karen found that she began to compromise bit by bit. An occasional cocktail, parties not always to her liking, but she sensed she needed to stay close to Harry. She noted a growing coolness.

Their first baby came, and for a time all seemed well. Harry was out of the service, but he came home changed; a bit rougher, drinking more, and given to frequent gambling. Yet he was a good provider, and a crack salesman.

First arrest

One afternoon Karen heard numbing news. Harry had been arrested at work and charged with embezzlement. Drunk and gambling, he had dipped into

company money. The news swept the small town.

Harry's detention was brief, for it was his first arrest. His parents repaid the company, and the judge issued Harry a suspended sentence with probation. Harry promised never to gamble again, and He found a sales job in a neighboring town. Another baby was on the way.

But in only a few months Harry was again arrested—drinking, gambling, and embezzlement. This time, jail seemed certain, and the word came that he had been seen with another woman. Karen moved in with her folks. They persuaded her to file for divorce.

While this scenario was playing out, I came to town as pastor of Karen's church. I found Harry to be well-mannered and personable but cold toward spiritual interests. Karen walked carefully to avoid alienating him, but she couldn't hide her hurt.

At Harry's second arrest, Karen continued to the church, confessing her spiritual compromise. I sought to dissuade her from divorce, but the hurt was too deep and her family too angry. Harry was still in detention when I left town for a preaching mission in another state.

The real thing?

While there, a letter came from Karen's family, warning that Harry would be calling on me when I returned. He was out of jail awaiting trial, and—said the letter—he had turned to a ploy to try to recover his family. He was pretending to be a Christian. The day I returned home Harry phoned. He asked to talk with me. I watched as he entered my study, but could detect no hint of deception. His demeanor was open and contrite.

He recounted how he had phoned as soon as he was free from jail. Learning that I was away, he hitchhiked 50 miles to talk with one of my pastor friends, and there Harry claimed he trusted Christ as Savior. He wept as he spoke. Not only was he clever, I thought, he was a consummate actor!

After a brief time, I suggested that we pray. "Pastor," Harry said, "I'm asking God for my family." His depth of feeling unnerved me. I affirmed he had a worthy goal, and I prayed politely, guardedly; not fully persuaded.

When I finished praying, I looked up. Harry was on his knees, his face bowed to the floor, tears dropping to the warped, faded linoleum. He cried out to God for his wife and babies.

Harry visited daily over the next weeks, asking for work to do around the church. At our midweek service he told his story, asking forgiveness for his past ways. He chose not to attend Sunday services, when Karen would be present. One by one the people of the church believed Harry, but Karen and her family remained adamant. The divorce proceedings wore on, as did Harry's problems. The date for his court appearance was set.

Finding a job was, of course, impossible, so Harry answered a magazine ad and began selling fire extinguishers door-to-door. And he sold them! Living with his parents, he sent his earnings to Karen. Christmas was coming on.

Karen took a part-time job at a small department store not far from the church. She attended services regularly, but refused my urging that she talk with Harry. I told her he was a different man, that I believed he was truly a Christian. But her hurt was too deep. She felt no love for him, only anger.

I reminded her gently that she, too, had lived away from the Lord, sharing Harry's life for three years. Might she not be at least partly at fault for his problem? Karen agreed, but the divorce could not be stopped, and she could not yet face the man who had betrayed her.

"Pastor, there will be a way!"

I shared this bleak news with Harry as we prayed together. He

Continued on next page

kept saying, "Pastor, there will be a way."

When Harry was summoned before the judge, he told of his new life as a Christian. Drink and gambling were gone. He asked for one more opportunity to prove himself. He must have been convincing, for the judge again suspended his sentence, imposing a rigid probation.

Christmas was now only days away. Harry helped decorate the old church with a huge spruce. Boughs and red candles trimmed each window. The building smelled like Christmas! I could sense discouragement overcoming Harry, and I determined to make one last effort to bring Harry and Karen together.

I spoke to her kindly but firmly, suggested that she owed the Lord, me, and Harry the courtesy of one visit at Christmas. She yielded and agreed to meet with Harry in my study on her half-hour lunch break the following day— Saturday—but she would *not* delay the divorce.

Harry received the news with elation, but I warned him not to expect too much.

What was the problem?

Saturday morning at 11:30 I sat at my desk, almost too numb to pray. I wracked my brain for some wisdom, anything that might soften Karen's heart. Nothing came. I feared for my friend, Harry. I feared for Karen and her two darling little girls. There was no argument I had not tried. I was near despair when the phone rang.

It was Ruth the florist, a member of our church. She said she had a problem I could solve. That was encouraging, considering my present state! What was the problem? Ruth said that a young couple had just come. They wanted to be married.

"When?" I asked.

"Right now! They don't know a soul in town, they look scared, and they have to catch a bus at one o'clock to go on their honeymoon!"

"One more thing," Ruth added, "they have no witnesses. Could you find a couple to stand up with them?"

"I'm sorry, Ruth, I just can't," I said. "I have an urgent counseling session..." Then it hit me! I think I shouted, "Send them over! But tell them to arrive exactly at noon."

I stood by the study door and watched the miracle unfold. Harry approached from the west, bareheaded in the mild winter day. Karen turned the corner from her store, walking hesitantly. And a very tall, thin man wearing a red and black checkered woodsman's jacket walked hand in hand with a petite, dark-skinned girl who carried a small bouquet wrapped in green tissue. They converged on the church together, as though it had been rehearsed.

A warm spruce fragrance filled the small sanctuary as I turned on the tree lights and lit two candles. We stood by the tree for the wedding, and the tall young groom and his pretty bride never dreamed God's full purpose that hour.

God's gift of love and family

The ceremony was simple and brief. I chose Scriptures that told of God's gift of love and family. I prayed earnestly that He would

"Peace on Earth"

"Peace on earth!"
The centuries are long,
And always jealousy and hatred,
The evil in men's hearts
Has kept the world from peace.

But always there are some
Who kneel beside the cradle,
Or the cross,
To find their gift of peace,
The promise, foretaste,
Of the peace that yet shall reign
Over all the earth!

—James Asa Johnson

from **His Gift to Me**, *© 1987 by the Advent Christian General Conference of America.*

knit husband and wife together, and grant His strength that they might share whatever life might bring. And I pronounced them man and wife.

As they shared a shy, sweet kiss, I stole a glance at Harry and Karen. I saw tears. The newlyweds hurried away to catch their bus, and now there was no time—or need—for counseling. We slipped into the parsonage where my wife had prepared a simple lunch.

I met again soon with Harry and Karen, then again, and not long after New Year's Day, we moved them into a small apartment. Church friends filled their cupboards with food.

It all happened nearly 40 years ago, and nothing just like it ever happened again. We have visited with Harry and Karen through the years. The last time Harry grumbled about the burdens that befall a church chairman and a Bible camp treasurer. We looked at pictures of their granchildren, and we remembered together the Christmas miracle. □

The story is true, save for the names of Harry and Karen. Lloyd Mattson has been actively involved in pastoral ministry and Christian camping. He lives at Whiteface Woods in Colton, Minnesota.

Making Room for the Son of God

J. Ronald Schoolcraft

I suppose more sermons are preached at Christmastime from the text in Luke 2:7 ("because there was no room for them in the inn") than any other. It's possibly the most familiar part of the Christmas story.

"No room!" There's a plaintive touch and tone to this statement. No room for the Holy family who had come to Bethlehem for the census. No room for the woman about to deliver her child. No room for the Son of God who had left the "Ivory Palaces," one who had descended the steps of glory to take on our humanity (Philippians 2:7). No room for the Christ child.

Let's not be too hard on the Innkeeper, but let us direct the spotlight upon our own city, and our individual hearts. In all the hustle and bustle of buying and exchanging gifts; the decorating, feasting, and frolicking; do we think about the real meaning of Christmas?

Other things, material things, press upon us and crowd out the Son of God. And those other interests have been invited into our lives; not forced upon us. We have made a choice to celebrate Christmas without the Christ.

We are standing idly by and letting the forces of Satan remove one by one those things that suggest to us the blessedness of the season. A cross is removed from a water tank, a star is removed from a mountain, a manger scene is removed from a government building. All these could be replaced if those who profess to know the Son of God would be as vigorous in protest as those few whose hearts are controlled by Satan.

"What can poor little old me do?" First of all, you can bow before the Lord and ask forgiveness for letting the world remove or curtail that spark of spirituality in your heart that flames up at the very mention of the Son of God.

Second, you can explain to the children that the exchange of gifts came about because one day long ago God gave a tremendous gift to the world (John 3:16) in the person of a baby in Bethlehem's manger. He came into the world to show us the way to eternal life.

Third, send Scripture verse Christmas cards. Last year I received one with a picture of a squirrel on it. Where on earth does the squirrel fit into the story of the birth of Christ.

Fourth, sing the traditional Christmas carols. Replace "Rudolph" with "Joy to the world; the Lord is Come!"

Finally, in your normal conversation watch for opportunities to talk about the real meaning of Christmas. Shun those affairs where liquor flows like a river and promote those Christ centered activities at your Church. Remember "Christ also loved the church and gave himself for it." □

J. Ronald Schoolcraft, Sr. is pastor of Trinity Advent Christian Church in Jacksonville, Florida.

The Greatest Gift of All

Ann Lay

Christmas! What a joyful, festive season. The colored lights, the music, the special cookies and candies are enjoyed by so many of us.

One of the biggest attractions for me is gift-giving. I usually spend a great deal of time looking for the "perfect gift" for each person on my list. When I find something that individual enjoys receiving, I know I've really given part of myself.

Ann Lay with her husband Steve and their children

Gifts come in a variety of shapes and sizes, but the best ones cannot be wrapped and placed under the tree. I have in mind those special acts of love that often involve sacrifice on the part of the giver. This Christmas I'm recalling two such expressions that enriched my life.

Two experiences of sacrifical love

At the age of two years I was severely burned in an accident. For a while, it was doubtful that I would recover. At the same time Mom was expecting her fourth child, and the doctor was concerned about her health. Yet Mom carried on bravely for the remaining weeks of her pregnancy. She and Dad endured great emotional strain, but their love and attention to my needs never wavered. By God's grace we both made it through that critical period. Eventually I came home from the hospital and Mom gave birth to a baby girl.

In the years that followed, my sister required surgery and I also had to undergo a series of operations. Now, as a parent, I can appreciate what burdens my parents had to carry, yet they gave of themselves gladly. Time, energy, and money were part of their gift to me; but also encouragement, comfort, and constant love. How I treasure those gifts I received from them.

The other happening occurred one evening when our son, Tim, was eighteen months old. I heard a door slam, then a shrill cry. There stood Tim, one tiny finger caught in the hinge side of the door. I quickly extracted the finger and wrapped a cloth around his hand. It was obvious we would have to go to the hospital.

Steve's parents lived across the street, and since his mother is great at giving moral support we asked her to accompany us to the emergency room. It was there that she gave me a cherished gift.

She saw how upset I was and offered to go into the room with Tim. She stayed by his side while the doctor placed seventeen stitches into Tim's finger. She consoled the little fellow as only a grandmother can, but she also spared me the pain and haunting memories that come from watching a physician at work. My mother-in-law gave me a thoughtful, priceless gift.

Love comes from God

What makes possible such unselfish giving as I received from my parents and mother-in-law? More than once they told

me it was the strength of Jesus Christ that enabled them to make it through difficult times. The gifts of love they offer those around them has its source in Him.

The New Testament declares, "Love comes from God," and again, "This is love: not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins."

On the first Christmas, Mary gave birth to Jesus Christ, Son of the living God. What prompted the Father to send His Son to earth? It was His limitless love expressed in the familiar words of John 3:16.

Jesus did not come to us because we deserved such a gift, or because He felt an obligation. It was simply His great love for mankind. That love led Jesus to die on the cross in our place. Because He wanted us to have a way to receive forgiveness for our sins, He offered us His only Son as the ultimate payment.

Whenever we are offered a gift we must decide whether or not to accept it. Today, God offers salvation through His Son. How will you choose to respond?

Twenty-nine years ago I chose to accept God's gift and Jesus Christ entered my life. Since then, He and I have faced many things together. He comforts me when I feel helpless and frustrated. He provides reassurance when I've lacked confidence and peace when anxiety threatens.

Receiving this gift involves more than mere agreement that He was indeed born in Bethlehem 2000 years ago. To receive Jesus requires a personal response. He stands before us with a special invitation, longing to help us cope with our deepest hurts and biggest problems. He wants so much to strengthen our weaknesses and to replace our bad habits with those that are worthwhile. He yearns to add meaning and purpose to our lives. Jesus Christ is truly the ultimate gift of love to those who receive Him.

This Christmas, won't you invite Him to take control of your life? Then you, too, will be able to enjoy the greatest gift of all. □

Ann Lay, and her husband Steve, and their children live in Aurora, Illinois, where they are active in the Aurora Advent Christian Church. The Lay family has recently returned from a fourteen-month assignment with Advent Christian World Missions in Japan.

Those Who Passed By

Those who passed by a stable
Could not know it was a palace,
That within a King was sleeping
In His mother's arms.
Those who passed a cross upon a hill
Laughed as they spoke of little things:
They did not know that there
A King was making possible
Their entrance to His Kingdom.

And so,
We pass along the common road,
Unmindful that He walks with us,
Seeking to transform our lives,
To make us part of His eternal realm;
Still He is ever near
And ever seeking for our loyalty
And love.

—James Asa Johnson

from **His Gift to Me**, *© 1987 by the Advent Christian General Conference of America.*

A Door to Korea

Floyd Powers

I hoped to visit Korea at least once before my work in Japan is finished. Amazingly, I've been able to visit not once but twice. Once in September of 1985 and again in April 1986.

The winds of God's spirit have blown with great power over Korea. It's a moving experience for any Christian to view the Korean landscape today, if for nothing more than to see the church spires that blanket the countryside. This is especially true for a Christian who lives in Japan where other religions, not church spires, cover the country. One will look in vain for a church spire in a small township in Japan, say nothing to a village. For a missionary who has worked 35 years in Japan, seeing Korea inspires me.

Different responses to the Gospel

As I sat in churches in Korea, I wept. I also wondered how two countries, side by side, could have responded so differently to Christ's gospel; one with an open heart and another with a heart quite closed. There were revivals of marvelous proportion in Japan's early days, but Japanese leaders began to cool down under the cold winds of Europe's criticism of God's Word.

Even so there always was a group of fervent Bible loving Christians in Japan. What caused the tiny response to their efforts? Many will venture answers. I would rather join those who pray day and night, both in Japan and in Korea, that God will visit Japan, as He has Korea, with a mighty revival!

The Powers family and friends in Korea

How did I happen to visit Korea? For that I may thank the Pastor of the Advent Christian Church in Tamatsukuri, Osaka, Japan; Philip Teranishi. He is an artist, whose work in the area of depicting Bible scenes has gained considerable recognition in Japan. He befriended a young Korean Christian in Osaka and became acquainted with the young man's pastor. That pastor lives in Taegu, Korea, a city of some 2,000,000 people located in the southern part of the Korean peninsula. Pastor Kim was impressed with Pastor Teranishi's Bible art and arranged an exhibition of it. His church is tiny by Korean standards (about 100 believers) and recently organized, with a small building on the outskirts of Taegu.

Pastor Kim's faithful core group worked night and day to set up the exhibition hall in a large church in downtown Taegu. The Christian Education building is well over 10 stories tall. The exhibit coincided with the annual assembly of one of the large Presbyterian denominations of South Korea, which was being held at the same church. That was in March, 1984. It was the first time for a Japanese Christian artist to do such a thing in Korea and it made the front page of the "Christian Newspaper" in Japan. A leader of the Presbyterian Assembly cut the tape at the grand opening of the art exhibit.

The door opens

So the way was well opened for an Advent Christian missionary to visit Korea and see something of her land and her church. When Pastor Teranishi and I visited Korea, Pastor Kim, his wife, and an interpreter gladly sacrificed a week of their time to escort us to many places. We were able to see several churches and even preach in two of them. We talked with the President of a large Presbyterian Seminary in Seoul. Another Seminary President in Taegu took us to lunch. I was able to meet a missionary couple who were the closest friends of Gil and Margaret Hudson when they were working in Taegu some 30 years ago.

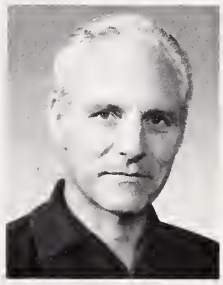
Pastor Kim skillfully arranged all these unforgettable moments. I will not soon forget the time we spent at an all night prayer meeting (something which most churches do every Friday night), the 5:00 a.m. prayer meetings, worship at one of Taegu's large churches (a 3:00 a.m. worship service), then at a tiny church of 100 people. I also talked with at least 10 local pastors and

saw the largest Christian church building in the world in Seoul, (we were late for the prayer meeting but the sexton gladly turned on the lights for us). I was asked to speak at a large University chapel, though they had barely met me.

The highlight for me was a birthday party hosted by Kosan Presbyterian Church. It was a few days premature but lacked nothing in terms of all out effort to make me happy on my birthday. I was dressed in typical Korean fashion, placed in the highest seat of honor, "loaned" two Korean "daughters," and all this for one they had met only a few days before. It was inexpressibly moving!

Churches in Japan and Korea need one another. I believe the Lord is making it possible for Advent Christians to be part of such a spiritual blessing. I have been able to go twice to Korea. The last was in April of '86 with Musa and Rebecca. The Kims again befriended us in their warm Korean way.

Pastor Kim has many contacts and is anxious to help Advent Christian churches develop sister-church relations with churches in Korea. Some Advent Christian congregations in Japan are already doing that. Pray that these bonds will grow stronger and ever more meaningful, not only for fellowship but also for new evangelism outreach. □



Advent Christian missionary Floyd Powers has served in Japan for nearly 37 years.

Men Only

Beryl Joy Hollis

There have been many meetings held for the women of our churches, but Republic Day of 1987 saw a new venture—a meeting for men only. (Three ladies did slip in—Barbara White, Biblewoman Mary Saroja (to lead the singing), and myself.)

To stop late arrivals, the men had been promised a bun and coffee on arrival. At this event, the men arrived before the buns did! So prayer, singing, and devotions started off the day, with "breakfast" at about 10 a.m.

Most of the day was taken up in group meetings, the groups rotating to different pastors. Two Bible studies covered the roles of men in the church and in the home, with the help of Biblically based questionnaires. The other two group meetings concentrated on one of four Bible cities, concluding with some practical activity. The study on Athens, for example, concluded with the "atheists" debating with the "Christians." That on Corinth, with searching out on a map places where evangelism could be possibly concentrated.

About fifty-five men from seven churches were present. The day concluded with a challenging address from Miss White. The feedback has been that the day was worthwhile and the men were pleased with what they learned.

Men from churches in the India Advent Christian Conference engage in Bible study. They studied the roles of men in home and church.

My Best Christmas Ever

Arthur G. Stone

As usual, Christmas season sneaked up on us. Shopping for presents. Christmas activities at the church. We planned to visit my wife's family in Virginia. As Christmas approached, everything became one big blur!

By Sunday night we had accomplished all the needed tasks we wanted to finish. Our plan was to head for Virginia, a 12-hour journey from Massachusetts, early Monday morning. However, my brother-in-law from Oklahoma called Sunday evening to let us know that my wife's twin sister Joyce, had fallen 12 feet and had been seriously injured.

We decided to stay at the house Monday until we had heard how Joyce was, for my wife Judy, was ready to fly to Oklahoma to help with her sister's children if needed. The phone call finally came the next afternoon telling us that Joyce would be alright. Around 5 p.m., we began the long drive to Virginia.

Journey to Virginia

After stopping for supper outside of Hartford, Connecticut, our two boys, Chris and Scott, ages 8 and 5, settled down in back of our little Mercury station wagon. They soon were fast asleep. Judy sat in the front seat holding our 18-month-old daughter, Jenelle, while I drove. No one seemed to mind the long trip that lay ahead of us. We had made the trip non-stop to Virginia many times before.

As night wore on, it began raining as we crossed the Virginia line. At 3:30 a.m., I remember saying to Judy, "Just three more hours and we'll be at your mother's!" As we drove, the rain came down harder, and I noticed that the car swerved a little. I thought to myself, "If there's a restaurant at the next exit, we'll stop and wait until the roads could be sanded."

We were just outside of Harrisonburg driving up a steep hill when I noticed a trailer truck coming up on us in the passing lane. The next moment, I realized that the car was swerving uncontrollably into the passing lane...back and forth across the road we went. The driver of the trailer truck didn't dare to brake, thinking he would jack-knife, so he kept passing us, veering off to the left shoulder of the road as much as possible to avoid us.

As the truck came up on us, I remember thinking, "This is it!" At one point I thought we would avoid sliding into the truck, but the next split second there was a loud crashing noise and the breaking of glass, as the left front fender of our car hit the back wheels of the trailer truck. We didn't realize it at the time, but at impact, the back hatch opened and our two boys were thrown some 30 feet into the air. I don't remember how long or how many times we spun around, but it seemed like an eternity.

Once the car stopped, Judy simply asked, "Art?", "I'm O.K." I replied, "are you?" Without answering, the next thing Judy did while holding Jenelle was to check for the boys. The next words she spoke were, "The boys are gone!"

Thank you, Jesus

We both managed to get out of the car, it was dark out as we yelled for our boys. We didn't know where they were, and what was worse, we didn't know what we'd find once we discovered where they were. At this point I yelled aloud my prayer, "God help us!" Sure enough about 30 feet from where I was standing I could see our oldest son, Chris, on all fours, very much disoriented, but in one piece it appeared. About 15 feet away I found our Scott lying on the shoulder of the road and bleeding badly from some deep cuts. Finally, I picked him up and held him once we realized he was alright. I remember yelling aloud a prayer of thanksgiving in the darkness of night, "thank you, Jesus!"

Wouldn't you know it, the next vehicle to come down the road was a Christian chalk-talk artist with his family in a motor home! That man and his family were a great blessing and help to us. They put our children into warm beds as we waited for the ambulances and police to arrive.

The staff at Rockingham Memorial Hospital in Harrisonburg were great! Doctors and nurses alike offered to let us stay at their homes, or to drive the family to our destination!

Everyone checked out O.K. after a full morning of tests. However, the doctor felt that Scott, who had several stitches, should stay overnight for observations. So Judy, Chris, and Jenelle went on to Iron Gate, once her family arrived at the hospital. I stayed with Scott in a room on the children's ward.

That night I lay awake thinking how good God had been to me and my family; how a fellow Christian and his family had ministered to us, the concern and excellent treatment of the staff at the hospital, and how all of us had escaped serious injury, including the truck driver.

In thinking about the goodness of God that night, a question came to mind. I sensed God saying, "If the outcome had been different and death or severe injuries had occurred, would you still think of me as good?" I searched my soul and after a few moments I responded from both my heart and mind, "Yes, Lord, you would still be good, for who else could I turn to...but Lord, thank you for your mercy!"

The next morning as Scott and I prepared to leave the hospital, three people, who had worked with us upon arrival at the hospital came into the room, and each conveyed that they had been praying for us!

Upon leaving the hospital a nurse said to me, "I'm sorry you had to go through such a bad experience during this Christmas season..." I thought for a moment, a smile came to my face and tears welled up in my eyes and I said, "A bad experience? No. It's my best Christmas ever!" The fact is, it was my best Christmas ever, and I'm still celebrating it! □

Arthur Stone is pastor of Oak Hill Bible Advent Christian Church in Oxford, Massachusetts.

Front: (L-R) Art, Judy and Jenelle; Back: Chris and Scott

Shouldn't Christmas Be for Everyone?

Harold Patterson

Do we believe that we sing? This Christmas season as we blithely sing *Joy to the World, the Lord Has Come*, what are we saying? Perhaps, we should ponder anew the words of the angel that special night so long ago; "Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord."

This great pronouncement was truly a missionary message! The coming of Jesus Christ into the world was indeed glad tidings. The celebration of His coming brings joy to those who hear and follow Jesus.

But have all heard? No, they haven't. Do you realize over millions of people in the world have never even heard that Jesus Christ came the first time. We need to remind ourselves that this message that was to gladden hearts was to be worldwide in its scope. There are great and joyous truths that we need to share with the world. The following are just a few:

God has a passionate love for this world

John records Jesus Christ as saying, "For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life." God so loved this world that He allowed Jesus to endure suffering and death on Calvary's cross for our salvation. Millions in the world today worship man-made gods that they believe are fickle, angry, and even vengeful.

What a revelation it is to hear of a God who loves them enough to send His own Son to die for them! This brings joy to those who hear it. What a privilege to say to a person, whether on the streets of our inner cities or in the deepest jungles of the world, God loves you! This is the news that their hearts have longed to hear.

God has a pardon for this world

Scripture tells us, "The Lord laid on Him the iniquity of us all." The Bible teaches that all men are sinners and will face the judgment and wrath of God. Think of what it meant for Jesus Christ to carry our sins to the cross! If you are forty years old, and have sinned merely five times a day, then you have committed over 70 thousand sins. If you are seventy, that number reaches over 120,000.

Multiply that by the billions that have lived and you realize what a tremendous act this was. John tells us that, "He is a propitiation not for our sins only but for the sins of the whole world. Is it any wonder then when people of every race hear that they can be forgiven for all their sins, there is great joy!

God has a person for this world

In Acts we read, "there is no other name given among men whereby we must be saved." It is only through Jesus Christ and the acceptance of what He did on Calvary that we can experience forgiveness.

Jesus Christ is the light and the liberator of this world. There have been many religious people, prophets, healers, teachers, and kings born but there has only been one Saviour, Jesus Christ. To quote a popular gospel song, "It is not Mohammed who will sit on the throne nor old Buddha who will welcome us home."

What have we exported to the world in the name of Christmas? We have shared Christmas without Christ, Christmas trees but not a cross, and reindeer instead of repentance. One of our missionaries some years ago reported a Japanese family looking in a shopping window in Japan. Their little boy pointed at a man in a red suit and saying, "Is that Jesus?" But, oh, what it is when people do find the real Saviour of the world, Jesus Christ. Then they, like the Apostle, Peter, can say they have found, "Joy unspeakable and full of glory."

God has a plan for this world

Luke reveals at the end of his

gospel that, "repentance and remission of sin should be preached in His name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem." We are reminded too, in the book of Acts, that, "God has commanded all men everywhere to repent."

God calls for a worldwide repentance and acceptance of Jesus Christ. That's why the Great Commission says, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature."

Perhaps you have heard that often quoted story about the missionary who dreamed he was taken back in time to see Jesus Christ return to heaven. An angel stopped Jesus and asked Him what He had left behind. Jesus answered, "I have left eleven men to continue my work and to go into all the world with the gospel." The angel looked dubious and said, "Well, what if they fail?" Jesus replied, "I have no other plan!"

God could have written the gospel in the heavens with fiery letters or He could have unleashed the angelic hosts as He did at the birth of Christ to inform the world of what He had done. But He has chosen through the avenue of witnessing and preaching to save mankind. You, have a part in the plan of God for we are told to be witnesses in Jerusalem, Samaria, and to the uttermost parts of the earth.

Whether it is across the street, around the corner, across the land or around the world we need bearers of glad tidings. There are those who need to know the glad tidings and good news that there is a man who was born, lived, died, and rose again the Saviour of this world. Can there be joy where there is no knowledge? What part

Continued on page 23

Japan Congregations Reaching Out for Christ

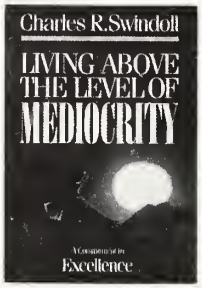
Pastor Shinichi Masuda, *President of the Japan Advent Christian Conference, was the General Chairman of the 1987 Keswick Convention in Osaka, Japan. This was his second year as chairman and he was able to ask Dr. Paul Rees, the main speaker to be in the Kayashima Advent Christian Church on the Sunday following the Convention. So our other Advent Christian churches in the area were invited to this special worship service with a total attendance of 150. The choirs of the Kayashima and Shinobugaoka churches combined to bring a rousing rendition of "Wonderful Grace of Jesus." Dr. Rees' meaningful message was from Luke 11:1-13 in which he pointed out that we as Christians are to be* **Midnight Mediators.** *People are hungry and we have the "bread." All those present felt privileged to hear this great 86 year-old man of God. In the photo above Pastor Masuda is at the podium. Dr. & Mrs. Rees are to the right of their Japanese interpreter.*

Another new work *is starting in Japan. The Kayashima Advent Christian Church is "mothering" a "daughter church" in Nishi Akashi, West of Kobe, meeting in a Christian kindergarten run by a relative of Pastor Shinichi Masuda. Pastor Masuda is the Pastor of the new church and his eldest son, Motoichi, a recent graduate from the Theological Department of a Christian college, is the resident "pastor in training." Motoichi was very active in Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship during his college days, holding a national office. He will drive the kindergarten bus for some of the income he needs. The kindergarten is located in a good residential area, and there is no other church there. The first service was held April 5, 1987. The Japan Advent Christian Conference is co-operating in this new work with financial assistance and Floyd and Musa Powers will be assisting in various ways. The name of the church is Uozumi Kohitsuji Church. Motoichi Masuda is pictured above.*

Giving God Our Very Best

Clayton Blackstone

Living Above the Level of Mediocrity by Charles Swindoll (Waco, Texas: Word Books, 1987)



"It is a wretched taste to be gratified with mediocrity when the excellent lies before us."

I wasn't emotionally prepared for Chuck Swindoll's latest offering. I began to digest its contents days before we began a long over-due vacation. Soaring like the eagle seemed an impossibility. Just leave me to scratch for a few bugs with a pen full of chickens.

Normally for me, the concept of excellence is a stimulating mental exercise. It's the practice of the same which I find frustrating.

Half way through **Living Above the Level of Mediocrity,** I struggled with the temptation to lay it aside. I've read a dozen books on excellence during the past two years. Swindoll arrived on the scene too late reasoned my saturated mind. Even the really good authors miss on occasion.

I didn't quit (largely because I had an assignment to complete), and I'm glad I didn't. The book carves out its own niche in the field of literature on the subject. Each page deserves careful consideration not because a communicator par excellence penned them, but because we all must resist the temptation to live like turkeys.

Swindoll carefully communicates throughout the book that excellence is not a synonym for success. It is character and lifestyle. For the Christian it may or may not be rewarded by recognition and added responsibility.

In light of recent developments in the Christian community, the author's call for accountability as a necessary ingredient for excellence is timely. "There are few roles in life where one is granted greater independence, more privacy, and higher respect. Without a personal, regular accountability — not forced but invited — few are strong enough to handle the battles alone." (p. 133)

Let's face it...we've all done battle with the temptation to coast. Mediocrity becomes an acceptable alternative to the blood, sweat, and tears required of excellence. Most of us need a reminder now and again that incompetence and the status quo fail to bring God the honor He deserves.

Swindoll sounds the alarm. He admonishes the reader to clear the cobwebs from our underused brain cells...to set a higher standard, even if no one else cares or dares.

It matters not...what others may think or say or do. We must seek our own "outer limits"—not merely drift along with the tide or half-heartedly catch a wave and wash ashore. No, we must soar. Since it is the living Lord in the final analysis who appraises our excellence, it is He whom we must please and serve, honor and adore. For His eyes only we commit ourselves to living above the level of mediocrity. He deserves our very best; nothing more, nothing less, nothing else.

That alone is excellence.

Vacation is now history. God did a recreating work in me during those days. The juices flow again. It's time to pick up the book again. Duty no longer calls me to complete a task. This reading will be because my spirit longs for the perspective of the eagle. □

Clayton Blackstone is pastor of the Advent Christian Church of New Hope in Lewiston, Idaho.

Building a Lasting Marriage

William Batson

Dr. Dobson asked the listeners of his national radio program, "Focus on the Family," to send their answers to this question: "Based on my experience, the advice I would most like to give newlyweds is..." He combined the most valuable insights with his own enriching wisdom and counsel. The result is a keepsake book designed for every married or engaged couple.

We've all heard that five out of ten marriages in America will end in conflict and divorce. But what is happening in the remaining five? In the first chapter, "Newlywed Nonsense," Dobson tells of the work of clinical psychologist Neil Warren, who says that only one or two out of ten will achieve intimacy in their relationship. Dr. Warren is referring to "the mystical bond of friendship, commitment, and understanding that almost defies explanation" (page 15). The remainder of the book is written as a guide for couples wanting a marriage that achieves that level of intimacy.

Two of the nine chapters, "How Not to Make the Biggest Mistake of Your Life" and "Suddenly, Virtue is a Necessity," have special relevance to engaged couples. The remaining chapters deal with issues such as male/female differences, what makes a good Christian marriage, family finances, and sex.

"The Marriage Killers" is a chapter which Dobson uses to warn of the evils that can rip a relationship to shreds. He warns, "Guard your relationship against erosion as though you were defending your very lives" (page 111).

This is not a marriage book filled with technical terms. Its design makes it a beautiful gift specifically for single adults, engaged couples, and married couples who have not yet celebrated their tenth anniversaries.

William Batson is Pastor of the Portsmouth, New Hampshire Advent Christian Church.

Peak Performance

Jeannie Irby

Holy Sweat by Tim Hansel (Waco, Texas: Word Books, 1987)

I enjoyed this book and I believe you will too! It will inspire you to let go of your "reputation" if you hold it more dearly than obeying God's Word. You will become inspired to be more like Christ.

The author brings out the personality of Christ as I know him from reading the Gospels. Yes, true He went like a sheep to the cross; but He never compromised His righteousness, His sense of right and wrong, just to be accepted by the religious crowd of His day.

Tim Hansel writes "We can get more concerned over the death of our pet goldfish than what happened to Christ on Golgotha. The story has become so familiar and commonplace...that it no longer arouses us. Think of Moses, Peter and Mary Magdelene and a host of the other biblical characters. None of them were *qualified.* Like us, right? But they believed God, and their lives became exciting for God."

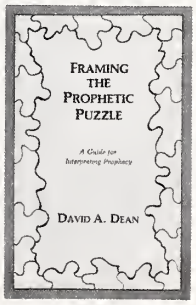
This is a book to read often. Pastors can use it as a resource for preaching. *Holy Sweat* will inspire congregations and people to get out of the habit of "playing church" and to allow God to perform miracles through them.

Jeannie Irby lives in Charlotte, North Carolina and is secretary for the Department of World Missions at the Advent Christian General Conference.

Understanding Biblical Prophecy

Freeman Barton

Framing the Prophetic Puzzle: A Guide for Interpreting Prophecy by David A. Dean (Lenox, MA: Himes Publications, 1987; 28 pp., $3.25)



This small six-chapter book is much more significant than the number of pages might indicate. It is intended as an introduction to prophetic study for lay people, and it serves the purpose well. It would be a good text for a Sunday school class or a Bible study. Each participant might read through the assigned chapter at one sitting on his own to grasp the general principle. Then the class could explore the reference cited, find additional ones, look at commentaries and other secondary sources, and explore the implications as time and interest permit. It could easily take a quarter.

The book is upbeat about prophecy—which is put in Scripture to be understood! Dr. Dean wisely encourages restraint in interpreting the details, noting a number of times that they are not meant primarily to satisfy our curiosity about the future. He emphasizes "Getting the Main Point"—Christ is coming, the reason for a confident *hope* in our pessimistic age.

One draws back a bit concerning imagery involving jig-saw puzzles and clocks. Our Advent Christian forebears (like so many interpreters today) were sometimes overconfident about their ability to fill in the details and to establish schedules. Some of the pieces are still missing. Or to change the imagery a bit, the central pieces of the puzzle are sharp and clear; others picture the background where details are sometimes a bit fuzzy. The day-year approach, for this reviewer, has some problems.

But this little book will not lead astray. It provokes question and research, rather than providing prefabricated answers. Use it with pleasure and profit.

Dr. Freeman Barton is Director of Library Resources at Warner Southern College in Lake Wales, Florida.

Caroline Michael
Director

My Times are in Your Hands

Psalm 31:15

Dorothy Randolph

"What's God been doing in my life?" I have reflected on these words ever since I was asked to write an article for the *Advent Christian Witness*. The answer always seems to come back, "Giving me time to see and enjoy His blessings." Since I recently retired, I now have daytime hours, Monday through Friday. If there are committee meetings or events scheduled on weekends or evenings, I'm not pressured with it using up the only time to do the things I feel have to be done. The list of God's blessings could be endless — here are a few of them.

A Time for God and Church

How wonderful to read God's Word and meditate on His power and love! How good to have daytime hours when I'm fresh to study a Sunday school lesson or prepare a devotional instead of early in the morning, late at night, or in the middle of the night when I have awakened, as in the past. I have had a free morning for a Church Women United brunch, or been able to say "Whenever it is convenient for you" we can schedule that Prairie States Conference Program Committee meeting or plan the year's WHFMS programs.

A Time for Family and Friends

Yes, it is fun to romp in the snow with my three active grandsons, to make cookies with them, or as seven-year-old Ryan says, "Grandma, do you have a project we could make?" How precious to cuddle my new granddaughter, feel her tiny fingers tighten around mine or just watch her many different expressions. I'm so grateful my son and daughter live near enough to drop in often. How blessed to have my ninety-year-old mother, a sister, and my brother's family spend a week with me at Christmas. While my mother doesn't hear or see well, it was enough to just sit together, sometimes without words, and remember the past. Aren't memories among God's greatest gifts? And friends! How rich they make our lives, sharing problems or perhaps a meal of cornbread and beans, fried okra or turnip greens (something not everyone would like).

A Time for Self

While all of the things above are for self because I enjoy them, there are carefree hours when no one else is involved. There's the luxury of a shampoo and bath in the middle of the day, reading a book, or shopping for just exactly what I want. It is a delight to watch pheasants, ducks, squirrels, or rabbits which often play or search for food in my yard. And how relaxing to stay in bed as late as I want in the morning!

Previously, I hadn't found time for my new neighbor. I had been praying, ever since she moved in, that God would give me a good chance to get acquainted with her. I often pray in prayer meeting and privately that God will show me opportunities to witness and be helpful to those around me. But God had to intervene to answer that prayer. I was still living in the fantasy that "next week there will be more time." Then I'll have her over for coffee.

On this particular day, I had tried to start my car, but it died out immediately and I flooded it trying to get it started again. Not wanting to run the battery down by grinding on the starter, I came back inside. While I was still thanking God that there wasn't anything urgent for which I needed the car, there was a knock on my door. There stood my neighbor with her baby. She explained apologetically that her two-year-old was locked inside the house, alone, and asked if she could leave the baby with me, out of the cold, while she tried to get back in her home.

When she returned a few minutes later she said "God has surely been with me today." She expressed her happiness earlier when she'd looked over and saw my car was home. She repeated "God was with me again" because her husband hadn't locked the garage door, as he always does, when he went to work. This gave me the opportunity to tell her about my car and assure her God was truly with her. It also gave me a chance to invite

her back another time and to offer to watch her children.

There are many jobs I hear about that need volunteers, but I want to be selective in offering my services. I don't want to become so busy that I fail to see God's daily blessings. On the other hand, I must not become so self-centered that I don't see and help those who are hurting. I realize how easy it would be to lean too far either way. Even though I have retired, may I always remember that my time is in His hands. □

Dorothy recently retired as Director of the Day Care Center of the LaGrange, Illinois Advent Christian Church where she is a Sunday school teacher, a deaconess, and WHFMS spiritual life chairman. She has a married son and daughter and three grandchildren. Dorothy is our National WHFMS Vice-president.

Men Must Have Wondered

Men must have wondered
Why a sudden brightness came to skies
At Bethlehem,
Why there was singing on the hill
So late at night.
But there were some who knew,—
Those who had followed
When a message came to them,
Whether in lands afar to eastward
Or on the neighboring hills:
They knew a King was born,
And came with gifts
To pay Him homage.

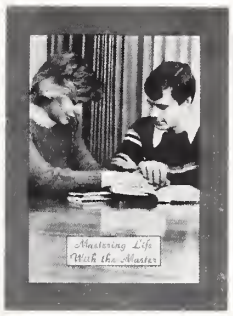
And still men wonder,
Men who have not followed
When a message came to them,
Why we still pay homage
At a manger.

—James Asa Johnson

1988 Program Kit Released

Leigh Worley

Leigh Worley of Smoaks, South Carolina was the WHFMS national program chairman for the recently completed program kit. The theme, "Mastering Life with the Master," is developed in twelve programs that cover many facets of life including relationships, adversities, attitudes, changing roles, and spontaneous sharing. The program committee greatly appreciates the excellent work the program writers have done.

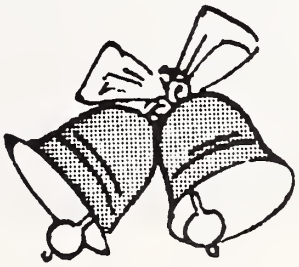


There are supplementary materials including a play for WHFMS Sunday, a TRP information sheet, unique materials for a week of prayer, two double sheets of clipper art, the recommended book list, and a letter from the program committee. The letter has many valuable suggestions for using this kit.

We had short articles submitted by nine Advent Christian missionaries and these are included with several of the programs as a "Mission Spotlight." You will be informed and challenged with their insights.

For several years we have included a suggested assignment with each program to encourage putting into practice some aspect of the program. To help you plan to share results of these assignments, we have included a time for reporting at the beginning of each 1988 program. Try sharing results of your assignments and see how valuable it can be.

Others on the 1988 program committee included: Joyce Mays, Sue Pleasants, Catherine Story, and Caroline Michael.



WHFMS Sunday Observed

LaValle, Wisconsin: Former member Beth Pugh shared her experiences as a missionary in Saudi Arabia. Several WHFMS women participated in the service. The WHFMS was saddened by the deaths of two long-time members: Edna Long and Dorothy Gray.

Baraboo, Wisconsin: Beth Pugh told about her work in teaching about Jesus and how secretive Christians must be in Saudi Arabia. Charlotte Taylor and Margaret Bump served at the organ; Vurla Harris read the Scripture; and Hazel Crary led in prayer.

Carr, Florida: A play about the lives of Frank and Susie Davis, "God's Servants," was dramatized by Mary Marchant, Carolyn Todd, Olivia Vickery, and Evelyn Barton. Ella Mallory sang two vocal solos. After the play the congregation enjoyed an ice cream social provided by the WHFMS ladies.

Mendota, Illinois: To accent the play about Frank and Susie Davis, the hymn selections were by Advent Christian writers including "City of Our God Renowned" by Horace Hastings. Lorena Lucas played the part of Harriet Hastings, wife of Horace. Other participants included Betsy Collings as Frank, Diana Rod as Susie, and Julie Haight as narrator.

Castle Hayne, North Carolina: Linda Register posed the question "Have You Finished the Work?" for her topic, asking everyone to fulfill their responsibilities in ministry. Linda is teaching a stewardship series for the whole church on Wednesday evenings, and has also presented several Trained Resource Person workshops in the Wilmington area. The Sunshine WHFMS presented a musical skit about Lydia's prayer meeting as recorded in Acts, and using all Scripture songs.

Doris Register, Flossie Batson, Linda Register, and Marilyn Thompson

Soperton, Georgia: The WHFMS play, "God's Servants: Frank and Susie Davis," was well received. After the morning service a luncheon was served for all grandparents in recognition of "Grandparents' Day."

Beaver Creek, North Carolina: The ladies led the worship service and presented "On Trial for Life — Fact or Fantasy?" with Patricia Pearson as the narrator; Margaret Carter-Minton, the Judge; and Anita Earp, the Witness.

Four Oaks, North Carolina: Jeanette Johnson, WHFMS President of the Eastern North Carolina Conference was the guest speaker. Special music was furnished by the *Sounds of Praise*.

News & Notes

West Head, Nova Scotia: The Ladies' Mission Fellowship planned a worldwide mission emphasis for the Fall Conference of the Nova Scotia churches. Director of World Missions Harold Patterson was the guest speaker. Over $5000 was raised for a vehicle for India.

Attleboro, Massachusetts: The WHFMS recently sponsored a TRP workshop, *Everyday Evangelism*, with Kathi Keyes, a Trained Resource Person from the West Wareham Advent Christian Church. The twenty-one persons attending found it challenging and instructional. Rev. Ed Whitford, from North Scituate, Rhode Island, was the guest speaker for the Massachusetts WHFMS meeting in November.

Aurora, Illinois: Ann Lay, recent short-term missionary to Japan, was the speaker at the Women's Fellowship fall brunch. A new group for mothers and young children was formed. They are meeting twice a month for discussions on parenthood, family life, and related concerns. Child care is offered for a small fee.

LaVerne, California: The WHFMS ladies distributed specially hand-printed envelopes to receive the Christmas in October contributions. Their fall rummage and bake sale netted over $200. Beside their monthly WHFMS meetings, many women meet each Tuesday morning in the "Mary Circle" with Mary Chandler for Bible study and fellowship. One of their community projects is to take place favors to a local nursing home each month.

From the President's Pen

Good morning! As I have thought and prayed about what I could share with you, I realize that there are no great words of advice I could offer. My life is not spectacular or extraordinary. I am a wife, mother, and a grammie, like many of you. My time is spent helping on the farm as needed. In your problems and concerns, I see mine reflected. And in your faith in Christ Jesus and the hope and yearning for His second coming, our hearts beat as one. I do thank the Lord for each one of you, and earnestly pray for you.

We live busy and hectic lives. As much as we may desire to do great works for the Lord, the demands of home, work, and family responsibilities may necessarily mean the curtailment of some of those "extra" activities. My life on the farm makes it essential for me to set priorities, even as you have to do. But I realize that, no matter how busy or hectic my day, my first priority is to Him and His Word.

Paul's prayer for the church in Colosse was that they "might be filled with the knowledge of His will, with all the wisdom and understanding that His Spirit gives. Then you will be able to live as the Lord wants, and always do what pleases Him. Your lives will produce all kinds of good fruit, and you will increase in your knowledge of God." This is my prayer for each of you, even as I find this working out in my own life.

As I spend more time with Him each morning, reading His Word and talking with Him, my desire is to please Him more. He is giving me more concern for those around me. Many are hurting, confused, and lonely without our Savior and Lord. We can and will offer them our love and help as His desires become our desires.

Paul goes one step further and tells the Colossians that whatever they do must be done with joy and thanksgiving to the Lord as they share in the building up of the family of Christ. I have just finished reading "The Beauty of Beholding God" written by Darien B. Cooper. That's the secret of our joy: beholding God. Be joyful, fruitful, and bring glory and praise to our Lord!

In His love,

Beatrice Moore
National WHFMS President
Rt. 8, Box 274, Concord, NH 03301

Mission Prayer Partnership

December

19 **Pray** for **Beryl Joy Hollis** to be refreshed and strengthened during a brief furlough to her homeland of New Zealand.

20 **Praise** the Lord for another record-breaking, goal-surpassing **Penny Crusade** for 1987.

21 **Praise** the Lord for two new churches started in **Nigeria.**

22 **Pray** for **E.A. Akpan** to be healed of dizzy spells that have bothered him since his beating by robbers.

23 **Pray** for our **servicemen**, especially those from your church who are away from their families at this time of year.

24 **Pray** for our **missionaries** and their **families** at home at this time of separation during the holidays. Pray that each would receive a blessing in spite of a sense of separation.

25 **Thanks** be to God for giving us His only begotten Son.

26 **Praise** the Lord for the faithful churches, Sunday schools, mission societies, and individuals who faithfully support Advent Christian missions.

27 **Praise** the Lord for a new school of evangelism in **India** with eight students.

28 **Praise** the Lord for the Director of Finance, **Bob Cole** and his skill in handling the money entrusted to Advent Christian causes.

29 **Pray** for **Marion Damon** as she directs the School of Evangelism in India.

30 **Pray** that the Lord would abundantly provide for the growth and expansion of the Advent Christian General Conference including **world missions** this coming year.

31 **Praise** the Lord for **Millie Griswold** for the fine work that she is doing as Director of Christian Education. May she have a special blessing today on this her birthday.

January

1 **Pray** for **Austin Warriner** that God would give him a special touch today on his birthday.

Prayer Partnership

2 **Pray** for **Musa Powers** as she assists her husband in reaching people for Christ in Japan.

3 **Praise** the Lord for the revival spirit in the church where **Frank** and **Judy Jewett** are ministering in Cebu.

4 **Pray** for **Francis** and **Lyne Ssebikindu** that God would give them strength as they continue their busy but fruitful schedule in Memphis.

5 **Pray** for **David Vignali** as he carries out many responsibilities for our mission in the Philippines.

6 **Pray** for Superintendent, **Margaret Helms** as she guides our mission work in the Philippines. God's strong hand be upon her work.

7 **Pray** for **Alice Brown** as she directs Oro Bible College. Lord, your Word dwells in Alice.

8 **Pray** that **Oro Bible College** will have the necessary funds to complete their expansion of dormitory and housing facilities.

9 **Pray** that the Lord of the Harvest would continually raise up more **laborers** for His harvest.

10 **Pray** for Advent Christian **youth** and **teens** to make decisions for full-time Christian service this month.

11 **Pray** for Barbara White as she assists our growing work in Kodaikanal.

12 **Pray** for **Thambusamy** and **Victoria Devairakkam** and their growing work in the Kluange area in Malaysia.

13 **Pray** for **Lucas** and **Beulah Devasahayam** that God would meet the many needs of that growing work at Banting, Malaysia.

14 **Pray** for **Barbara White** as she enjoys her birthday cake today that the Lord will show her how blessed she is for casting His bread upon the water.

15 **Pray** for **Abel Garcia-Lara** as he supervises our new work in Mexico.

16 **Pray** for **Arturo Angulo Rosas, Ever Perez Morales,** and **Alberto Gomez Ramos** as they work in Ensenada and Tijuana, Mexico. Pray that they would be able to see victories and be encouraged.

17 **Pray** for our retired **missionaries,** that God would continually use them.

18 **Pray** for **Dorothy Warriner** that as the candles are lighted on her birthday cake this day, people will come and help her light the candle of the Lord for the people in Japan.

Shouldn't Christmas be for Everyone **From page 15**

will you have in sharing the good news of salvation? What part will you have in sharing the real story of Christmas?

God has a purpose for this world

We are told in Scripture that there will come a day, "when the kingdoms of this world will become the kingdoms of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." In Revelation 11 we see a great multitude of nations and people of all tongues standing before the throne with psalms in their hands. This is a picture of those who are the fruit of a worldwide missionary endeavor from all the ages gathered to praise our eternal Lord. When our Saviour comes a second time, and the redeemed rise from their homes and the graves all over the world to meet our Lord in the air, what a day that will be! Truly, we then will be able to sing with real meaning, "Joy to the World, the Lord is Come, Let Earth Receive Her King." Maranatha! □

A graduate of Berkshire Christian College, Harold Patterson is Director of World Missions for the Advent Christian General Conference.

Lessons on Integrity **From pg. 23**

which can only be described as an attempt to portray himself as normal. The last paragraph reads: "The immortal Yeats wrote, 'not a man alive has so much luck that he can lay with it.' 'As usual,' continues Hart, 'Yeats put it right. A man would be a fool to take his luck for granted.' Thus, in his own words, the fallen candidate's political epitaph: Gary Hart—fool. And that's just scratching the surface."

I'm not saying we have to be perfect...but we must be perfectly honest. Effective communication is the product of empathy, integrity, and truth. Recent days affirm the observation.

Gary Hart might still be the front runner for the Democratic presidential nomination if he had read and heeded the counsel of a wise political figure of centuries ago. Solomon commented then that "The man of integrity walks securely, but he who takes crooked paths will be found out" (Proverbs 10:9).

May the God of grace keep you from "might have beens!" □

Clayton Blackstone is pastor of the Neighborhood Advent Christian Church in Lewiston, Idaho.

Lessons on Integrity from Gary Hart

Clayton Blackstone

Gary Hart: ABC's *Person of the Week*...the cover story of *Time*, *Newsweek*, and *U.S. News & World Report*...former presidential front-runner...political hot-potato.

You probably didn't miss the story unless you were shipwrecked on a deserted island in the Pacific. Following closely on the heels of the Jim Bakker fiasco, the Hart story gave us another exciting adventure in the life of a public figure. The stories have all the earmarks of an afternoon TV serial.

Frankly, many of us savor the juicy tidbits. But there's more to this story than beautiful women and late night rendezvous. It's about a trait of character seldom discussed until recently.

Let me allow Michael Kramer, Chief Political Correspondent for *U.S. New & World Report* to put some perspective on the Hart story; "...a good many Democrats have always been uneasy about Hart... They knew as everyone else should know—that because it is impossible to split a whole person in two, the tests of private relations and public life are not different. And Hart flunked too many of those tests too often."

Hart failed because he neglected a basic ingredient of communication. He lacked integrity. There lies the magic of effective communication. Its absence undercuts the best of speeches. Ronald Reagan was the "Great Communicator" because people believed him. The President's style hasn't been altered one iota in recent days, yet his agenda is stuck on hold. The difference...because of the Iran initiative, a great many people no longer believe him.

In case you're cloudy on the meaning of the word integrity, let me use Mr. Webster to break through with a definition or two. "State or quality of being complete, undivided, or unbroken. Unimpaired state; soundness, purity. Moral soundness; honesty, uprightness."

In plain, unvarnished American English...we walk our talk.

The ancient Greeks knew what Gary Hart (and many of us preachers) refuse to believe: The man is the message. They argued that there were three aspects of effective communication. The absence of one short-circuits the process.

The first...**pathos**. Does the speaker share the hopes, dreams, longings, and pain of the listener? It's a good question for those of us charged with dispensing the Word of Life to people on the Lord's Day. We can spit shine the message...deliver it flawlessly...and stand tall as we relish what Howard Hendricks calls the "Glorification of the Worm Ceremony." Unless the sheep sense that we genuinely care, however, the words remain forever entombed in oratorical wonder.

The second...**ethos**. Contemporary students of communication use "the medium is the message" to describe the same concept. Here's where Hart (and not a few preachers) stumble. The finest communicator loses credibility if integrity is questionable.

A speeding ticket received the week after preaching on submission to authority (Romans 13) scars our integrity. All the sermons on the family will not correct the damage done when we publicly ridicule our spouse.

I've bemoaned life in the fishbowl. Sometimes I wish someone else would preach for awhile. I tire of always being on my guard. But like it or not, it is the price we pay if we aspire to be effective in the art of life-changing communication.

The last element the Greeks included was the one we generally make first...**logia**. The message. Yet content cannot be processed if the listener detects lack of empathy or hypocrisy. I missed that in school. I was taught to exegete the text, accurately identify the verb tense, and double check my findings in several commentaries. I know that I practiced selective listening on occasion during the pursuit of a degree. But for the life of me, I just don't recall many hammering the point home...I negate the best of my sermons when I pretend that I've got it all together and haven't.

Gary Hart should have known better. He went out of the campaign lashing at the press, refusing to assume responsibility for his repeated lapses in judgment. First, he vacillated on why he changed his name. Later, he lied about his age. Campaign creditors were strung along, used and then run from. Then, it was the charge of womanizing. Hart argued that these had nothing to do with his ability to govern. In the end, he pulled out because, in his own words, he had become the issue.

There's a lesson here not to be ignored. Minor compromises and excuses erode our integrity just as sure as major moral failure. The Gospel flourishes when our culture perceives that we are people of our word. It flounders when we gloss over our sins as if the rules don't apply to us.

Michael Kramer concludes *The Self-destruction of Gary Hart* this way: "A few months ago Hart wrote a miniautobiography, the purpose of

Continued on page 22

Correction

The words "From *Jubliee;* copyright 1986 by Prison Fellowship" were inadvertantly left off of Charles Colson's column in the November *Advent Christian Witness*. We apologize for this error.

Your Servants for Christ's Cause

International Missionaries

Philippines

Alice Brown (March 24)
Box 223
Cagayan de Oro City 8401
PHILIPPINES

Margaret Helms (September 18)
P.O. Box 263
Cebu City 6401
PHILIPPINES

Frank and Judy Jewett
(December 11 and January 29)
Danny Jewett (June 13, 1976)
Timmy Jewett (June 26, 1978)
Letitia Jewett (April 13, 1980)
P.O. Box 263
Cebu City 6401
PHILIPPINES

David Vignali (May 10)
P.O. Box 263
Cebu City 6401
PHILIPPINES

Japan

Floyd and Musa Powers
(October 8 and February 28)
Rebecca Powers (Nov. 11, 1971)
18 - 11- 4 Motoyama Kita cho
Higashinada ku, Kobe shi 658
JAPAN

Austin and Dorothy Warriner
(January 1 and January 18)
3-37 Okayama Higashi
5 Chome; Osaka Fu 575
JAPAN

India

Marion Damon (March 27)
Box 17, Andivilla
Kodaikanal 624101
INDIA

Beryl Joy Hollis (December 16)
American Advent Mission
Velacheri, Madras 600 042
INDIA

Barbara White (January 14)
Box 17, Andivilla
Kodaikanal 624101
INDIA

On Leave

Bessie Smith (March 27)
Box 657, Waukewan Street
Meredith, NH 03253

National Missionaries

Malaysia

Thambusamy and
Victoria Devairakkam
3A, Jalan Sayang Housing Trust
86000 Kluang, Johor
MALAYSIA

Lucas and Beulah Devasahayam
30, Jalan Cempaka
Taman Gembira
42700 Banting, Selangor
MALAYSIA

Memphis

Francis and Lyne Ssebikindu
(May 13 and May 8)
Faith Nancy (September 28, 1982)
Ashley Grace (January 21, 1985)
2590 Faxon Avenue
Memphis, TN 38112

Mexico

Abel Garcia-Lara
368 Anita Street, Sp. 62
Chula Vista, CA 92011

Alberto Gomez
Arturo Angulo
Ever Perez
c/o Abel Garcia-Lara

Nigeria

E. A. Akpan—Superintendent
Nigerian Advent Christian Mission
P.O. Box 1642
Uyo; Akwa Ibom State
NIGERIA

Advent Christian General Conference
P.O. Box 23152
Charlotte, NC 28212

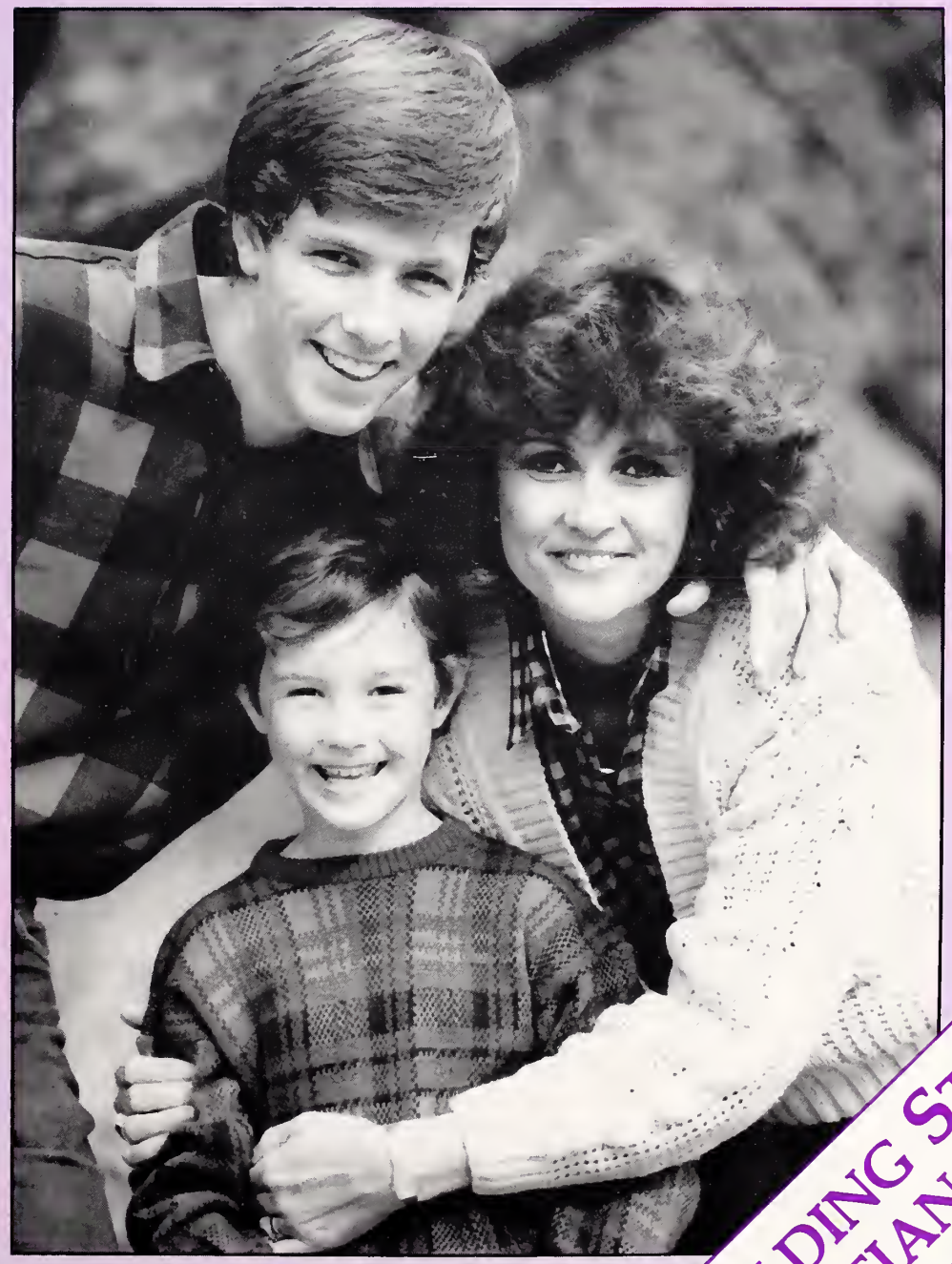
Harold Patterson; World Missions
Millie Griswold; Christian Education
Caroline Michael; Women's Ministries
Roland Griswold; Church Expansion
Robert W. Cole; Finance
Robert Mayer; Publications
David Northup; Executive Vice-president

1004848
University of North Carolina
Serials Dept. Davis Library
080 A
Chapel Hill, NC 27514

C286.7
A24

Advent Christian WITNESS

January 1988



BUILDING STRONG CHRISTIAN FAMILIES

a new feature on page 23

Member
epa
Evangelical Press Association

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
Robert J. Mayer

MISSIONS
Harold Patterson

WHFMS
Caroline M. Michael

GRAPHIC ARTS
Linda Perault

TYPESETTING
Susan Gettis

EFMA MEMBER MISSION

EVANGELICAL COUNCIL FOR FINANCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY ECFA MEMBER
The symbol of trust

Advent Christian Witness (ISSN 0741-4307) is published monthly except for a combined July-August issue, 11 times a year, by the Advent Christian General Conference of America, 14601 Albemarle Road, P.O. Box 23152, Charlotte, NC 28212. Postmaster: Send address changes to *Advent Christian Witness*, P.O. Box 23152, Charlotte, NC.

Policy: As the official publication of the Advent Christian General Conference of America, the *Advent Christian Witness* publishes the teachings of the Advent Christian Church and promotes the task of evangelism both in North America and throughout the world.

Rates in the U.S. and Canada: one year, $11.00. Single Copy, $1.00. Overseas one year, $14.00.

All articles and materials are copyright ©1987 by the Advent Christian General Conference unless otherwise indicated. Permission to reprint available upon request. The views expressed in this magazine are those of the author and may not necessarily reflect those of the editor or the Advent Christian General Conference.

from the editor

Character: Does it Matter?

With every new year, my desk is flooded with articles recapping the major political and religious stories from the previous twelve months. Those who write these long and sometimes boring expositions desire to give editors and readers the final word on the religious significance of world events and crises.

This year, we don't need to be told the major news stories of 1987. Most of the lists include the following:

- The moral and financial problems of PTL founder Jim Bakker.
- The derailed Presidential candidacies of Gary Hart and Joseph Biden.
- The selling of American arms to Iran combined with diversion of profits from those sales to rebel forces in Nicaragua.
- Douglas Ginsburg's withdrawal from consideration for the Supreme Court because of the marijuana use while teaching law at Harvard.

What's the common thread woven through these stories? Two words: Honesty and character.

Do honesty and character matter in selecting political and religious leaders? Of course they do. How leaders handle money, how they treat their families, how they grapple with the sometimes fine lines between truth and lie, are important in assessing their abilities to succeed in public office or handle the public trust.

But in today's television dominated landscape, we must not lose the ability to distinguish between past mistakes and questions of character. Network television reporting makes little distinction between past and present, between one time act and habit. Judge Ginsburg's use of marijuana while teaching law at Harvard is treated equally with Presidential candidate Bruce Babbit's onetime usage of the same drug.

In this editor's mind, breaking the law while *teaching law* is far more serious and raises legitimate questions about a public figure's ability to effectively govern. If we're unable to distinguish that from moral lapses made during adolescence, I'm fearful that we'll lose potentially good leaders both in church and society.

Christians should especially be concerned about the moral character of political and religious leaders. But that concern must be tempered with the reality that all of us are imperfect people who make mistakes. When the media reveals past mistakes of leaders, we must not assume those mistakes automatically disqualify them from leadership.

Honesty and character will be important issues in the upcoming 1988 elections. That's good as long as we, the voters, exercise care, compassion, and common sense in evaluating those we elect. □

Volume 36 Number 1

Advent Christian WITNESS

January 1988

FEATURES

You'll Love it When God's Plan Comes Together Clayton Blackstone 4
What is God doing in our world? How will Christ's soon return impact our society and our lives? Pastor Blackstone explores these questions and relates Advent Christian teaching about Christ's return to living on the edge of the 21st century.

Missions: South of the Border? Ed Whitford 8
Ed Whitford's twenty five years of ministry in Mexico from the backdrop for this look at why Mexico is a strategic land for missions efforts.

Are We Growing or Just Changing? Roland Griswold 12
Change is inevitable. But is growth? How do we overcome obstacles to growth and fulfill our Lord's command to make disciples?

All the Things They Taught Me Were True Kayoko Shirotani and Alice Osborne 14
Kayoko Shirotani, an Advent Christian believer from Japan, shares her testimony of God's work in her life.

Beware: False Prophets Brent Carpenter 16
It goes by several names: Health and Wealth Gospel; Dominion Theology; Prosperity Teaching. Brent Carpenter, pastor of the Clovis, New Mexico Advent Christian Church, contends that this teaching distorts the Christian faith with overemphasis on materialism.

ON THE COVER

Our cover highlights a new bi-monthly column by Pastor William Batson, called *The Family Builder.* Pastor Batson will focus on different issues relating to marriage, parenting, and a variety of family issues. Look for his column every other month and if you have a topic you would like Pastor Batson to address, please send your suggestion to The Family Builder; Advent Christian Witness; P.O. Box 23152; Charlotte, NC 28212.

DEPARTMENTS

From the Editor 2

Women's Ministries 18

Prayer Partnership 22

The Family Builder 23

YOU'LL ♥ IT . . .

When God's Plan Comes Together

Clayton Blackstone

The anticipation built as October 22 neared. For thirteen years, the announcement of the soon return of Jesus Christ was proclaimed with intensity and conviction. William Miller was convinced that the prophetic Scriptures revealed the certain conclusion of history in 1844.

The day dawned cool and overcast in Boston. Thousands waited. Disappointment replaced celebration when Jesus didn't come.

Misguided. Deranged. Ignorant. Instruments of the devil. All were used at one time or another to describe the "Millerites" and their belief that this world system was about to end.

Miller was neither the first nor the last to attempt to pinpoint the time of Jesus' return.

Such predictions generate fallout. Like the boy who cries "wolf" too many times, the message of the Second Advent loses some of its impact and credibility each time the warning fails to materialize.

But the impact is not only felt outside the boundaries of the church. Disappointment hurts! Each time it enters our lives, hoping becomes more and more difficult. We bury our pain. We ignore its source. But the effects don't go away.

Make no mistake! You can still go into the local Christian Bookstore and find a good number of writings on the subject, but the thrill is gone.

Tim Stafford observes that "We have lost the taste of eternity. Our Christianity provides practical help to establish sound marriages, raise well adjusted children, form healthy relationships, and contribute positively to our communities and the world. We also want a faith that cures loneliness, disperses anger, and fills our God-shaped vacuum with a "sweet, sweet spirit." (*Knowing the Face of God,* Grand Rapids, MI. Zondervan Publishing House, 1986, p. 78)

The past possesses no meaning. The future holds no relevance. All that matters is now.

The Good News does contain wise counsel for marriage, child rearing and friendships. It offers the promise of a personal relationship with Jesus. It extends to us the right through Jesus Christ to address God as Father.

But this is not all there is to God's plan! The history of the world will not be downhill after our generation departs the scene. Our stint with time is not history's climax.

The expectation that Jesus is coming—may come at any moment— is what gives our faith meaning. Without it we are operating as deluded and foolish people.

"Brothers, we do not want you to be ignorant about those who fall asleep, or to grieve like the rest of men, who have no hope. We believe that Jesus died and rose again and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him. According to the Lord's own word, we tell you that we who are still alive, who are left till the

coming of the Lord, will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord himself will come down from heaven with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will be raised first. After that, we who are alive and are left will be caught up with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever.

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

Please don't miss the main premise of the paragraph. The descriptive words and the exciting pictures stimulate us, but in our exhilaration we overlook "And so shall we ever be with the Lord."

Our expectation of the future anticipates the return of Jesus.

In early November 1973, I was ordained. But that was not the most exciting event of that special week-end. On Friday evening, my parents and I decided to call Hazel to see if she wanted to fly down for a couple of days. The hours that followed are a blur for both of us.

At midnight, one half hour after returning from baby sitting she headed for the airport, ninety minutes away. I didn't sleep that night. A diamond ring waited to find its way onto her finger. After a three-month separation, we would be together again.

I cannot remember what kind of plane she flew on, in fact, I don't recall asking. I did not ask whether there would be any layovers or whether it would be a direct flight. I couldn't give you the flight number if you offered me a million dollars. I would see the woman I loved. That was all that mattered.

We tend to think of the Second Coming in terms of war, the Man of Sin, disaster, events in the Middle East, and judgment. Such things make for fascinating discussion, but miss the point of the early believers' excitement. The Second Coming will be, first and foremost, the return of a person.

The trumpet call will not herald the victory of one philosophical system over another. The archangel will not announce the conquest of democracy over communism. Both will proclaim the arrival of Jesus Christ, the friend whom we love.

John adds to our understanding of the climax of history:

I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride dressed for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of the things has passed away.

—Revelation 21:1-4

Memories are a strange thing. Some things fade in significance. Others loom larger than life. Time mysteriously alters the landscape of history. Here's an illustration or two to reinforce my point.

Watergate was an embarrassment to the American political system. Personal politics aside, Richard Nixon resigned from the presidency in disgrace. Many historians today argue that the Nixon presidency will be remembered, not for Watergate and an embarrassing resignation, but for opening the door to China, new dialogue with the Soviets, and the end of the Viet Nam War.

Until early in the 1900's, people thought that human flight was impossible. When men finally soared with the birds, flight over the oceans proved the next challenge. Then came the jet. Later, Americans stood breathless as Alan Shepard was propelled into space in a suborbital flight. Today we take it all for granted.

I'd rather fly than drive. And until the Challenger disaster, we yawned during the launching of the shuttles. Lost to our memories are all the people who died reaching the next horizon. Equipment crashed. Ideas mocked. Reputations shattered.

Tim Stafford puts it this way. "Memory selects from all the things that happen only the few that will prove of lasting importance... Only by looking back can we separate the wheat from the chaff...the chaff utterly vanishes from history as though it never existed...Scripture mainly presents a view of life from the end—the eternal perspective.

Continued on next page

This is how it will all seem when its over. (*Knowing the Face of God*, p. 82.)

Our expectation of the future anticipates being in the presence of God and experiencing his touch.

God will be with us. Distance will not come between us. The frustrations of "not yet" will disappear. The wait will be over. The inconveniences forgotten. The pain of undeserved suffering erased. Each tear gently wiped from our face by our Friend.

Today we wait. We are, admittedly apprehensive. Things will be so different. We are both frightened and excited, torn between our love affair with the familiar and our expectations of eternity. Will it be worth the wait? Will the death of Jesus really be enough or will my life fail the test of judgment? Seeing God both fills us with joy and frightens us.

History moves surely toward its conclusion.

Our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us. The creation waits in eager expectation for the sons of God to be revealed. For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the glorious freedom of the children of God. We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we await eagerly for the adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies. For in this hope we were saved.

—*Romans 8:18-24*

Our apprehension germinates from just cause. Remember Isaiah's encounter with the Living God. He pronounced a curse on himself because he had seen the King, the Lord Almighty. John fell at the feet of the Lord Jesus. Moses could not see God and live.

But that will change. We will become like him. We will see him unveiled, not a side shot or back view, but as he is. Our present apprehension will yield to unbridled joy.

Our expectation of the future anticipates our total redemption so that we might enjoy the presence of God.

Hazel and I remember our first meeting differently so I confess that this account is up for debate. I heard a great deal about this young woman from her grandmother in Georgia. I was a young student pastor, unattached and looking. As a concerned parishioner, she often dropped hints of this vision of loveliness that graced her family.

I beheld Hazel for the first time at Camp Washington in Maine. I stood in awe of this gorgeous creature. I recall that I hardly knew what to say.

The feelings of fear passed. We would, in time, become friends and make a commitment to spend the remainder of our lives together.

Things must change before I can feel such freedom around God. He promises to transform us so that no barriers will remain. The lines of communication will be unblocked. The fear erased.

I turn to Tim Stafford to sum it up. "Amid the mess of our lives, the broken experiments and the mistaken theories, the joy and the sorrow is a vein of pure gold. Sometimes it surfaces. Other times it lies buried. But ultimately the whole mess will be purified with fire. What is left will be shining gold. (*Knowing the Face of God*, p. 84)

Why should we look forward to Christ's return?

Because we will be with someone we love. Because the One who sacrificed his life so that we could be friends, wants to spend time, eternal time, with us in an unbroken relationship. Because he will purify us of all the things which make us apprehensive about seeing him.

Why then are we still unsettled? Why are we not certain that we want Christ to come back? Why do we wish Him to delay the occasion so that we might experience some pet fantasy?

In sorting out the answer, we must discern between the natural apprehension which is caused by unfaithfulness or lack of preparation.

Natural apprehension dispels as the relationship deepens. Brides and grooms have premarital jitters which give way to joy as the marriage matures into growing oneness.

Unfaithfulness and failure to adequately prepare produce feelings which do not dissipate so easily. Delayed gratification is not the in thing these days, but it is central to dealing with fear produced by our own actions or lack of them.

"The fact is that many worthwhile endeavors aren't fun," says syndicated radio and TV commentator Mort Crim. "True, all work and no play makes Johnny a dull boy. But

trying to turn everything we do into play makes for terrible frustrations, because life—even the most rewarding one—includes circumstances that aren't fun at all. I like my job as a journalist. It's personally satisfying, but it isn't always fun."

Today is a good time to rid ourselves of those things which make us afraid of the return of our God. The things we cling to so feverishly now will be chaff that is blown away and remembered no more then. Our questions won't be important. Our doubts will dissolve when we see him "face to face." The tears will be gently brushed from our face. You'll love it when God's plan comes together!

"Since everything will be destroyed what kind of people ought we to be? We ought to live holy and godly lives as we look forward to the day of God and speed its coming...Since we are looking forward to the new heaven and the new earth, the home of righteousness, make every effort to be found spotless, blameless and at peace with him."

—1 Peter 3:11, 13, 14

"The King is coming! Let the kingdom prepare!" □

A graduate of Berkshire Christian College, Clayton Blackstone is pastor of the Advent Christian Church of New Hope in Lewiston, Idaho and a regular contributor to the Advent Christian Witness.

Making My Church a Better Place

Steve Spearing

How can I make my church a better place to be? That's a good question. After all, the church is the bride of Christ. It should be special to us because it is special to Him.

I recently talked with a man who gave an interesting analogy of his opinion of the church. He said that the church is like a convoy. The church can only move as fast as the slowest vehicle in the convoy. There is something to be said for his insight.

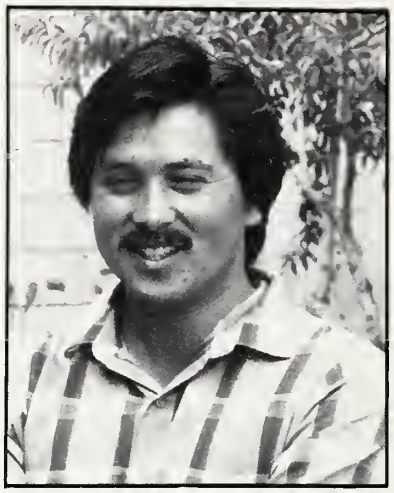
Let me give some keys to making your church a better place to be:

- Make sure **Christ** is **the Lord** of your life.
- **Pray** for your church daily, its people, programs, pastor and yourself.
- Have a strong **commitment** to your church. People without a strong commitment to the Lord and His church soon fall by the wayside.
- Be positive about your church. You can find fault with anything.
- Ask not what can my church do for me, rather **ask, what can I do for my church.**
- **Parents** establish a family altar in your home and each night with your children pray for the church teaching them God's love for His church.
- Practice expressing your **love and appreciation** to the Church family. When disagreements arrive, practice Jesus' way of making them right.
- **Learn to forgive.** "Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors." When we pray that part of the Lord's prayer we are praying, "Lord Jesus, in the same way I forgive others, you forgive me."

Remember the words of Jesus to the church of Smyrna in Revelation 2:10; "Be faithful even to the point of death, and I will give you the crown of life." □

A graduate of Berkshire Christian College, Steve Spearing is pastor of the Smithfield, N.C. Advent Christian Church.

MISSIONS: SOUTH OF THE BORDER?



Ed Whitford

A friend of mine once said, "Mexico's a great place to visit but don't ever invest your money there." Is this the same attitude the church has taken with the gospel? We have gone around the world but failed to reach out to Mexico with the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

How did Mexico come to be the laid-back land we picture? Why does the sleeping man in a large sombrero come to mind to most of us when Mexico is mentioned? Where did modern day Mexico come from and why is Mexico so different from the U.S., her neighbors to the north?

In 1519, five years after Martin Luther started the Protestant Reformation at Whittenburg, Germany, the Spanish explorer Cortez landed on the coast of Mexico. While Europe wrestled with theological issues, others were more concerned with geography. These issues would change the lives of many.

Two landings: The Pilgrims and Cortez

Of course, we in the Protestant tradition trace our theological heritage back to Luther. Just as his decisions were encouraged by those who stood and died for their beliefs before him, his stand encouraged those who followed. Thus we have those on the Mayflower coming to the New World, and founding Plymouth in 1620. They came to escape the tyranny of King Charles I.

Church Historian Kenneth Latourette says that by 1636 there were several settlements that churches of a Congregational pattern. "In principle New England was made up of Christian commonwealths where Christians controlled both the Church and the state and where all society was governed by Christian standards. Yet, the membership of the church was not composed of all the inhabitants but only of those who could narrate a conscious Christian experience. They were bound together by a covenant with one another and with Christ, as the head of the Church."

On the other hand, Cortez in his search for land and riches seems to have brought along the church to place its blessing on whatever he did. The priests who came with and after him administered baptism and by that rite declared that all were converted. We read that only 12 years after Cortez had landed, the Franciscans alone had baptized more than a million and the total baptized by all the priests was between 4 and 9 million.

Christianity was only incidental to Cortez' purpose. He was after gold! He found it and destroyed Mexico with his greed and lust for all that he saw.

Though separated by almost one hundred years these two new world landings determined the divergent directions the Mexican and American societies would take. Those in the Mayflower came in search of freedom. Those who came with Cortez, searched for gold. In the ensuing

years the seeds of each search brought forth their fruit.

The seeds of greed were sown as Cortez raped and butchered Mexico. As he sent gold and riches back to Spain, each involved received his share and the early philosophy of the "mordida" (pay-off) was ingrained into Mexican society.

Seeds of the next revolution?

Today we read of those patriots in Mexico who gave their lives for justice and freedom. Some made inroads into dealing with "mordida." Yet in every Mexican city you can see barriers still being built to keep the poor out and the rich blind.

That is why we see today men and women coming in droves across our borders. They are not streaming the other way. In the past few years Mexico has fallen farther behind economically, because her politicians first ask what they can do for themselves and seldom what they can do for their country. Financial reports indicate that 60 billion dollars of Mexico's capital has been exported. Add interest to that and you can see why the nation is saddled with a 90 billion dollar debt, and why there is nothing left for the poor. It was once again ripped off and put in holding for the rich.

What is left in Mexico? Not much! We have recently seen an exodus of Mexican professionals. Many are coming to the United States. According to their own testimony, why not stay? There is nothing to stay for. Left in Mexico are the poor and the politician. Neither need money because one never expects it to be better and the other is deluded by power.

Is revolution coming?

Is this a setting for the next revolution? The communists come with promises of what they will do for the poor when they take power. They've had minor success with land reforms that have given many peasants their own land, even though most have not been able to prosper by it.

The religionists armed with liberation theology, claim that moral revolution and change must be brought about socially and politically with fate if necessary. These solutions make sense to the person who is not spiritually enlightened but physically needy.

While evangelicals preach the gospel and zero in on spiritual needs, believing that's the place to start, it's not fast enough for a bleeding humanity who was told materialism is a human right. Blinded to the spiritual they see no other goal in life but to be rich, healthy, and comfortable with a little happiness thrown in. And who can we blame for the world thinking this, but ourselves as the Church of Jesus Christ, having presented this by our own lack of dedication and sacrifice.

It seems the sin of desire and greed that we attributed to the mission of Cortez has invaded the church. The desperation of the early Mayflower pilgrims seeking to be free of oppression has found its way into the hearts of the poor in Latin America and especially Mexico.

Continued on next page

(L-R) Director of World Missions Harold Patterson with Pedro Serrato, director of Tecate Bible Institute; Abel Garcia, supervisor of the Advent Christian Mexico mission; and Ed Whitford, pastor of the N. Scituate, Rhode Island, Advent Christian Church.

Missions: South of the Border?

Will new doors open in Mexico?

What we need is a return to our roots. Are Christians willing to take the gospel at face value? Can we cast aside the trappings of the world and engage in serious spiritual battle with the enemy for the eternal destiny of people? We must shed hypocrisy. We must put the Word of God to work in our own lives. As we do that it will take us to the doors of opportunity that will allow us to bring the gospel to those with the most need in the nations like Mexico.

Will God open new doors for Mexico by sending those who care to minister to those in need? If we would send enough missionaries so that Mexico were flooded with the gospel, would that bring a new start?

There are over 1,500 denominations in the United States and Canada. If each one would send a missionary, that would be a small army. The door is open even though Communism is active. People are searching. If we do not act *now* it will soon be too late. Why should we go? Because the Great Commission has not been revoked!

By going into Mexico we as the Advent Christians through an open door that God has given to us. Pray for those involved, and we will keep you informed of the progress. □

Ed Whitford is pastor of the N. Scituate, Rhode Island Advent Christian Church. He helped begin Tecate Bible Institute, a school that continues to train Mexican nationals in evangelism and church planting. His over 30 years of missions ministry in Mexico continues today as he serves on the Field Council for Advent Christian missions Mexico project.

The WITNESS *talks with* Ed Whitford

Mexico has been the focus of Ed Whitford's life and ministry for the past thirty years. Ed's burden to see the gospel proclaimed throughout Mexico led to the founding of Tecate Bible Institute just across the border from California. From the Institute, hundreds of Mexican nationals have been trained to plant churches and share the message of Christ's love.

His twenty five years of mission service in Mexico gives Ed Whitford a unique perspective on that country. As the Advent Christian Church once again opens mission work in Mexico, Ed agreed to answer several questions about his concern for the Mexican people and current conditions there.

Ed, you've had a burden for Mexico for many years. How did your interest develop?

Bob, it came more against my will than anything else. Right after I came to know Jesus Christ as my Savior, I was growing in my Christian faith, witnessing, and busy in evangelism. Then God indicated to me that he wanted me in Mexico.

I didn't want to go. But I knew this was God's call upon my life. Finally, I responded. I got on my knees and said, "Lord, if you want me to go into Mexico, I'll go but you'll have to change my heart."

Several months later, God put us through a series of providential circumstances where my wife and I adopted three Korean children. By that time we realized that people all over the world needed Christ's love and we were in Mexico.

For many years you directed a mission in Mexico. Tell us about that agency and about the scope of its work.

Once we decided to go to Mexico, we followed the course of action established by missionaries like C.T. Stud, Hudson Taylor and George Mueller. We were going by faith and at first we wondered if God would meet our needs. We believed He would but we wondered how. We went to Mexico to evangelize people for Christ and discovered that God had already prepared the way for us. Provisions were made for land, buildings and people.

God enabled us to begin a Bible school, a day school, and a local church on the Bible school campus. Through Theological Education by Extension (TEE) and correspondence courses, the school reached many people throughout Mexico. God demonstrated through the effectiveness of these ministries his provisions and care.

Because of its large Roman Catholic population, many see Mexico today as a Christian country. Is that true?

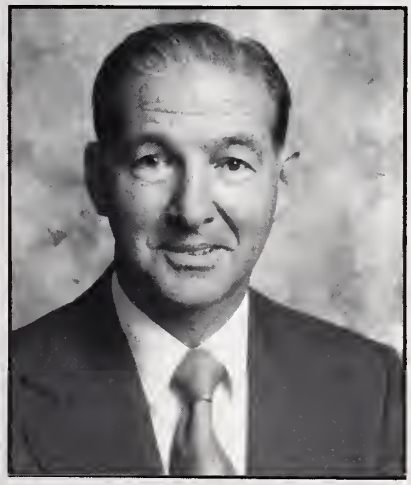
That's a philosophical question. Many would say yes, it is Christian. But, I don't think you can call Mexico a Christian country anymore than you can call the United States or Canada a Christian country.

Each has a different application of Christian truth but neither has resulted in the kingdom of God. When you compare Mexican and American history, note the coming of the Spanish explorer Cortez in the 1500s. Cortez came with his people to search for gold. Our forefathers came in a search for freedom. That contrast is important for understanding the divergent religious heritages of Mexico and the United States.

According to most research, the Mexican population is over 95%

Roman Catholic. But that has not made Mexico a Christian society. When Cortez came to Mexico, he brought priests with him and they baptized people. And that made them believers according to Cortez and the priests. They baptized people by the millions.

Yet most people in Mexico kept their old Indian beliefs and culture. Their traditional customs intertwined with their new beliefs so that you don't end up with Biblical faith but a combination of Christian ideas and pagan practices.



As the Advent Christian Church begins ministry in Mexico, in your opinion, what should our focus be?

Because of the political and economic situation, I think the focal point of missions must be church planting. Evangelism is taking place. There are evangelists working throughout Mexico. But there's so much territory and so many people who have not been reached.

Because of this, the best thing we can do is establish churches and train leaders. We need local churches in Mexico where the focus is on evangelism, discipleship, and leadership training.

The Mexican government has laws against propagating religion, and in some provinces Christians face physical and emotional persecution. Will those realities impede the progress of any ministry that Advent Christians may start in Mexico?

Up until now, this has not been a problem. The law, as I recall it, restricts "open-air" meetings. Yet, there have been times authorities have overlooked this whenever the government is sympathetic. The law also limits the number of people meeting in a private home. Once you pass that limit the government makes you stop.

The Mexican government looks at the church as an organization with a building. They do not understand the biblical concept of the church being the body of Christ. So anytime a group of people meets in a building for worship they are, by virtue of meeting in that building, calling that building a church. That's against the law.

Mexican authorities don't always stop house churches, but they have the right to according to Mexican law.

The law's purpose is to deter religious intervention in their economy. In most cases, it's enforced only when they feel threatened. Otherwise, they tend to overlook it. Presently, much is being overlooked and there seems to be an open door into Mexico for the gospel.

Let me ask you about Marxism. What impact does Marxist-Communism have in modern-day Mexico?

Communism has made great inroads into Mexico. As always when inflation comes, there is scarcity of money, people are hungry, and promises by the communists have great appeal. People look to these promises for future hope for themselves and their families.

Marxists have gained much ground in Mexican society in the last twenty years. They are in many places of influence. In the last election, communists displayed the hammer and sickle on the outside of party headquarters and forcefully demonstrated, their desire for a voice in the government.

Marxists formulated Liberation Theology. Liberation Theology concentrates on social need, using Christianity as a tool to bring about forced relief. Christian principles are wrongly applied to an unbelieving society giving socialism a foot in the door, making it appear that all are going to be cared for and be liberated from political and economic pressure.

Although evangelicals want economic and social justice they know that Liberation Theology is a counterfeit Christianity. Marxism disguised by Liberation Theology will not improve living conditions in the long term. Look at their history. And beyond that it is antagonistic to spiritual purpose. Those who are concerned for the spiritual are looked at as doing little more than, "saving souls."

You pastor the North Scituate Advent Christian Church in Rhode Island. How did you become an Advent Christian pastor?

As an inter-denominational missionary I had the opportunity to study the Scriptures without denominational bias. No one told me what I had to believe. I'm committed to the Word of God and I believe in its inspiration. I believe in

Continued on page 22

Are We Growing or Just Changing?

Roland E. Griswold

Several years ago, my wife Millie and I attended the big Huffman Family Reunion, held at Camp Hiyoca in Hickory, N.C. I knew I had married into a big family, but it overpowered me to see how many kinfolk gathered that day. Among those in attendance was Katherine from Arizona. She hadn't been back to North Carolina in 25 years. I asked her if she remembered most of the people present. "I recognized a few, but we've all changed so much!" was her reply.

Dr. Roger Gould said, "Change is inevitable, growth is not." Why can there be change without growth, whether it be in people or churches? If change and growth are to be synonymous it will be because we identify and resolve the obstacles to growth. For humans, the obstacles may be improper diet, inadequate rest (or activity), or financial limitations. For churches, the obstacles are similar: improper diet (understanding but not applying Scripture), inadequate activity (being spectators rather than servant/ministers), financial limitations (not believing God when He promises to provide all we need to serve). When growth-restricting obstacles are removed, then change can equal growth.

Paul gives a great measuring stick for growth in Colossians 1:28: "We proclaim him, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone perfect (fully mature) in Christ."

There are five obstacles to growth that are characteristic of non-growing churches. Let's look at them.

Phantasmagoria

This term describes a lantern show consisting of various optical illusions. It illustrates the at-

titude that puts a large investment of energy and resources into a few special events, ignoring the fact that growth is a process. We do not like to admit that people are not usually won to Christ in just one contact or that new Christians do not mature in a week of special meetings. To admit this would demand that we give more of our time.

Many churches experience limited growth, based on the "Can you top this?" attitude. Members decide to get involved in a ministry based on the kind of event it is, they pick and choose. Leaders let excitement over an event become the criterion of success, rather than asking if the event helps bring lost people into the Kingdom of God or develop Christian maturity in believers.

Amblyopia

This illness causes a dimness or blurring of vision. It is more commonly called people-blindness. We tend to see people for what they can contribute to our programs, rather than seeing them in the light of what Christ can do for them. Too often, our primary concern is institutional survival, not meeting human needs. Our church is viewed as a place for ministry to saints only.

Amblyopia prevents us from seeing the church as a real community: "All the believers were together and had everything in common" (Acts 2:44). The early church gave herself to worship, education, fellowship, prayer, communion and evangelism. As spiritual optometrists, we need to ask what we're doing to make ours that kind of church. Then we need to take decisive action to move in that direction!

Warm fuzzies

Making others feel happy, content, secure is good and essential. But it too often leads to koinonitis: an inflammation of fellowship. We are concerned only with how our ministries make us and others *feel.*

The discipline for good health doesn't necessarily make me feel good. It's hard for me to pass up bread and desserts. But when the scale moves past 190, I know it is time to cut back, regardless how it feels. Churches that are always concerned about giving warm fuzzies and avoiding prickly messages need to change if growth is to be realized.

Selective Memory

Selective memory is the habit of remembering those things which gave us pleasure, while repressing other things. "We've always done it this way" is a sure symptom of this disease. Methods that were effective in the days of Billy Sunday, Joshua V. Himes, or our parents, *may* not be the most effective methods for use in this day for winning people to Christ.

Pluralism

Pluralism describes a society that has both multiple choices for everything, and no single value system. In most areas people have many churches to choose from. We compete with one another to help people see that ours is better than the one on the next corner. But can we *really* meet everyone's needs better than anyone else? "Do your own thing" and "Whatever turns you on" have been guiding lights for a lot of people in this generation.

Overcoming these obstacles

How do we deal with these obstacles to growth? As a start, try these two concepts:

First, look at Paul's strategy for growth in 1 Corinthians 9:19-23. "I'm free, but..." He voluntarily adapts to his target audience so that he might accomplish his goal. What was Paul's goal? "I have become *all* things to *all* men so that by *all* possible means I might save *some.* I do *all* this for the sake of the gospel."

The apostle gives us three directives:

- Determine your target audience and adapt your strategy to reach them.

Continued on page 22

Roland Griswold served the Advent Christian General Conference from 1969 to 1987 first as Director of Youth Ministries and then as Director of Church Expansion.

All the Th
Taught Me

Kayoko Shirotani
and Alice Osborne

Kayoko Shirotani and her husband pastor the Advent Christian Church at Shinobugaoka, Japan. This church was founded by missionaries Austin and Dorothy Warriner.

Mrs. Shirotani is affectionately called *Sunshine* by David and Alice Osborne because she reflects the warmth and love of our Heavenly Father.

When Mrs. Shirotani became a Christian, she not only fell in love with Jesus, but also with His Word. Wherever she went and whenever she had a few moments she read her Bible. Going to her work at an Osaka bank, as she rode the electric train, she would read. At her lunch hour she invited her fellow workers to read the Bible with her.

At first one young lady studied with her as Sunshine explained the Scriptures to her. Soon there were two, three, and then four studying God's Word together. By the time Sunshine left her work at the bank to help the Osbornes at Kayoshima Christian Center, nine young women and men met together during their lunch hour to study Scripture. A number of them became Christians. They also met on their own time for prayer.

The salary she received at Kayashima Christian Center did not compare with her salary at the bank.

In her own words

Sunshine tells her own story with the following words: "I thank the Lord for leading me to Florida. I am pleased to meet you, and I'm so happy to see my father and mother Osborne again. They are my spiritual parents and I'm their daughter in Christ.

"I thought I would never see them again on this earth. But our Lord has given this chance to me. Praise the Lord!

"I found the Lord's greatness and faithfulness through their lives in Japan. And now I have learned all the things they taught me were true.

"Twenty eight years ago, my father became a Christian when he was fifty years old. He was a Buddhist.

"He got sick and was hospitalized with T.B. He heard

Kayoko Shirotani (center) with David and Alice Osborne at the Advent Christian Village in Dowling Park, Florida.

ings They Were True

the gospel for the first time there, and received the Lord Jesus as his Savior.

After he left the hospital he met Mr. & Mrs. Osborne. At that time, they lived in Kayashima and were involved in pioneer evangelism.

"Though my father couldn't speak English he became their co-worker. Father Osborne and my father became good friends.

"After Kayashima Christian Center was built they began to teach children in my home in Korimizo. Church worship services were later started in my home. The Horimizo church building (a pre-fab building) was built by Sunday school offerings from Advent Christian congregations in the United States and Canada.

"During this time my mother, my brother, and I became Christians. My married sister also believed in Jesus.

"I worked in a bank and began to tell about the Good News. Then some of my co-workers received Jesus Christ. We began a small meeting during break in the bank. I wanted to learn about Jesus Christ and I wanted to be a full-time worker for Jesus. I shared my wish to mother Osborne. She showed me the verse of the Bible: 'God is always at work in you to make you willing and able to obey His own purpose' (Phil. 2:13).

"So I retired from the bank and worked in the Christian Bookstore in K.C.C. with my mother Osborne.

"I have got so many precious things — faith, love, trusting Jesus — from her. We visited people to teach them about Jesus. I have had the most beautiful time in my life with Jesus.

"After two years I was baptized. I entered the Shijonawate Bible Institute as a first term student. My father also became a student.

"For my internship, I worked at the Kurayoshi Advent Christian Church with Mr. & Mrs. Powers.

"After graduation I married Shirotani. We had been classmates. After marriage we worked at the Yonago Advent Christian Church for seven years.

"Nine years ago we returned to Shijonawate, and we currently work in the Shinobugaoka Church. Rev. Warriner was the first pastor of this church. The Warriners are working at the Asukano Church now.

"God has sent a number of career and short-term missionaries from the Advent Christian Church to Japan along with much prayer and many offerings. We never forget your love for us. Thank you so much.

"Today a very small percentage of my people are Christians—less than 1% of over one hundred million people. We Christians pray that God will work a miracle so that ten years from now at least ten percent will be Christians. Please pray with us for this.

"Mrs. Osborne used to say, 'Jesus is coming soon.' We must prepare ourselves for His coming." □

KNOW SOMEONE WHO DESERVES A JOURNALISM SCHOLARSHIP?

The 325 periodical members of the Evangelical Press Association are vitally interested in the future of religious journalism.

The Association offers $500 to $1,200 scholarships each year to Christian college juniors and seniors, and graduate students, committed to a career in print journalism.

Further details and application forms are available. Forms must be completed and returned by April 1.

Write now to:

epa

Executive Director
Evangelical Press Association
P.O. Box 4550
Overland Park, Kansas 66204

The Dangers of the Health and Wealth Gospel

BEWARE: FALSE PROPHETS

Brent Carpenter

A serious doctrinal perversion is sweeping across the annals of Christianity today. This dangerous dogma is particularly appealing to the church of affluence, yet it is one of the most damaging, discriminatory, unbiblical scenarios ever introduced.

It has been enumerated as the doctrine of "prosperity," teaching that those who *really* love the Lord will be blessed with material wealth. This overture is being played day after day as media evangelists, pastors, and church officials create a false sense of well-being in those who are the product of an affluent society. The stigma of responsibility is replaced with a softening of attitudes as more and more Christians are led to believe it is God's will for them to seek after the material satisfaction of the world (often to the exclusion of the spiritual).

Some have even gone so far as to equate God's blessing with material wealth, something that was never promised to Christians in the New Testament. God has promised to supply our needs and spiritual desires, not those that are worldly and mere flight of fancy! The wolves in sheep's clothing of our day will tell you in essence that Jehovah wants you to have it *all*, now! Material wealth is directly proportional to faith purported, in other words. It becomes obvious why such an affront should be particularly attractive to many clerics of this time; those that are constantly begging for more money while they stockpile and squander millions for themselves. This could not be pleasing to the Lord!

Yet, the converse of this doctrinal thesis is perhaps more controversial than the original statement. Little clarification would be needed to conclude that if wealth were an indication of faith, poverty would be a token of discredit. Those who are indigent, obviously, are disloyal. Nothing could be further from the truth, yet many today believe their own lack of success in worldly venture, is due to faltering before the Creator.

Certainly in America, where billions of dollars are expended each year to build florid structures to house the saints for a few hours a week, this euphoric picture of Christianity is heartening. However, I wonder if those Christians who live in Africa, India, and other third world nations would be

gratified to know that lack of faith keeps them from owning a color TV and a VCR?

Valid? I think not. Many destitute people practice powerful adherence to Christ, often in the face of dreadful opposition. Are these His discards? To answer would be ludicrous.

How soon we forget the words of the Lord, "it will be easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven." Those of us who have been luxuriating in material wealth must never lose sight of the fact that all we have really belongs to God. Our worldly possessions cannot possess us, lest they become our god. Man can only serve one master and those who lay up treasures for themselves here on earth are those who have made a fatal selection.

It would seem, that the church has taken the society's view of success and happiness and adopted it for its own. Good looks, money, fame, and power are important to current society, but love, humility, generosity, and purity spell happiness for the follower of Jesus.

In the eyes of the world, Paul, the unattractive, ill-spoken, troublesome, tentmaker, would be deemed an astronomical failure. Yet, God saw him as of eminent value in proclaiming of the Good News.

Material prosperity can never be a measure of truth and faith as it pertains to life in Jesus Christ...*Beware the false prophets!* □

Brent Carpenter pastors the Clovis, New Mexico Advent Christian Church. This article appeared originally in the Clovis Advent Christian Church newsletter.

Caroline Michael
Director

Encouraging Your Husband

Jean Thompson Dibden

Are you the wife of a man who seems to love the Lord less than you do? Does your husband resist going to church with you? Is there tension in the air on Sunday mornings as you want to take the children to Sunday school? Do you wish your husband would better assume his role as spiritual head of your household?

If your answer is *yes* to all four questions, you may want to read the suggestions below and see if you wish to apply them to your situation.

First, **call on the Lord.** You need His help. By yourself you cannot engineer changes. Jesus tells us in John 15:4, 5 to abide in Him and to let Him abide in us. "No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me. I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing."

Second, pray for a supernatural love in you for your husband. With that love, you will always see your husband with eyes of love instead of as someone whom you want to change. God will work amazing things in each of you, changing both of you to become what He wants you to be. Philippians 2:13 tells us, "For it is God who works in you to will and do what pleases him."

You know that being loved just as you are is much sweeter than feeling that you have to live up to some image of what you think another person wants you to be. Jesus loves unconditionally. He tells us in Matthew 10:8, "Freely you have received, freely give."

Third, praise God for the honor He has bestowed on you to be placed in a household — to be a wife and a mother. God established the first family, and you are carrying on that pattern in 1988. It's really a short time, amidst all the years, that you have a turn in making your house a home for your family. Some persons do not find themselves in a loving family situation today. The husband has left or has died. Or perhaps there has never been a husband. "Rejoice in the Lord and be glad, you righteous; sing, all you who are upright in heart!" (Psalm 32:11). God watches over you, your husband, and your family.

Fourth, be aware of opportunities to defer to your husband. To the children, you might say:

1. We'll ask Dad what to do when he comes home.
2. Your father must help us decide this matter.
3. I believe your Dad would want us to...
4. I'll talk it over with your father to see what advice he will give.

In this way the children will come to expect their father to be the leader in making major decisions.

To your husband, you might say (possibly at the dinner table):

1. What do you think we should do, dear?
2. We need your help in making this decision.
3. I need your opinion about this situation with our daughter.
4. Do you want us to go with you?

Your confidence in your husband will challenge him to be fair, loving, and considerate of each family member. He will give more thought to what is best for his family. How could anyone *not* be honored to be given so much respect? Perhaps the decision to have the children in Sunday school and to become a teacher himself will seem to come about quite "naturally."

Fifth, keep believing that God will honor your commitment to His word in Ephesians 5:23, "For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church." See yourself in this arrangement, and remember that Jesus promises never to leave you or forsake you, (Hebrews 13:5b). Keep trusting in Him to bring about the harmony that you yearn for. Remember to thank God for even the slightest victory — in either one of you. □

Jean is a free-lance writer who has recently received her Master of Divinity degree and has been ordained to the Christian ministry. She has been a college instructor in English and she lives in Farmington, Maine.

Appalachian Women

President Janet DuBois convened the Appalachian Regional WHFMS annual meeting and expressed appreciation for everyone's cooperation in making the National Convention a success.

Angela Johnson sang "My Peace I Give Unto You" and presented information about the TRP workshops. Philippine missionary Margaret Helms related some of her experiences and made her prayer cards available.

Director of Christian Education Millie Griswold spoke on "The 'Herstory' of Our Faith," relating the achievements of Advent Christian women in denominational life throughout our church history. She encouraged women to meet three challenges facing our women today. Women must accept the challenge to lifestyle evangelism and fulfill the "outreach" aspect of the WHFMS *Guidelines for Growth*. Women need to become involved in the decision-making bodies of the church and assist in setting evangelism priorities. The final challenge was to design a women's ministry that will appeal to more women and recognize women who are serving in all areas of church life.

The delegates voted to support the capital funds drive of the Department of World Missions as their regional project. They voted to cooperate with the Appalachian Region in raising $10,000 for needed repairs on the buildings at Blowing Rock Camp.

The regional budget heavily supports United Ministries by suggesting a contribution of $2.50 per month per member. With about 530 members this will total nearly $16,000 in one year.

The following regional officers were installed by Janet DuBois: President Betheleen Facemyer, Vice-president Judy Tidwell, Secretary Iris Easter, Treasurer Ruby Brookshire, and Auxiliary Superintendents Elaine Preslar, Carol Chambers, and Nancy Okes.

Western Washington Women

Barbara Nims served as the devotional leader for the WHFMS Conference meeting and Nancy Winslow presided. The delegates voted to send $200 to the Advent Christian Church in Memphis to help meet some of their needs. The guest speaker was Carrie Hoogie of Sumas, Washington, a former member of the Mormon Church. She shared her experiences as a Mormon and how she had come to know Jesus as her true Lord and Savior. Her testimony and how she is now witnessing to Mormons was exciting.

(L-R) Back Row: Barbara Nims, Luella Johnson, Nancy Winslow, Mim Crouse; Seated: Billie VanDiest

Conference officers are: President Nancy Winslow, Vice-president Maxine Lobb, Secretary Miriam Crouse, and Treasurer Luella Johnson.

Pocahontas Conference Rally

The Adria Advent Christian Church, North Tazewell, Virginia hosted the rally with women attending from Crossroads, Elbert, Princeton, and War as well as from Adria. Carol Chambers' devotions highlighted the use of one's hands. Beautiful hands are used to bless others. She used Scriptures from Matthew 19 and Numbers 8. They voted to send $100 to help with repairs at Blowing Rock Camp. Regional WHFMS President Betheleen Facemyer challenged the ladies to "Occupy until Jesus Comes" by sharing the good news with others. President Alma Harvey announced their annual meeting will be at the Crossroads Church on May 7, 1988.

Fall Rally at Vernon

The new project adopted by the Connecticut and Western Massachusetts WHFMS Conference is to restore a cottage on the Plainville Campgrounds for the India missionaries Marion Damon and Barbara White for their retirement. Fifty-nine women attended the Fall Rally at Vernon, Vermont. They made plans for their first conference retreat which will be held on May 21st at Coventry, Connecticut. Conference President Ann Ball is sending out quarterly newsletters to the local presidents and announced their annual meeting for January 16, 1988 at Windsor, Connecticut.

Money tree at Lone Star

A Green Christmas

As a visual aid to stimulate giving for Christmas in October, the two WHFMS circles at the Lone Star Advent Christian Church in Clifton Forge, Virginia set up a twig tree and provided pins for contributors to pin their donations on the tree. This was done by old and young alike during the playing of Christmas carols and the result was $275 for this project.

Missouri Valley WHFMS

Camp Wilderness near Iberia, Missouri was the setting for the Missouri Valley Conference meeting. Delegates and visitors were present from Ballwin and Iberia, Missouri and Villisca, Iowa. There are two locals at the Brays Advent Christian Church in Iberia as well as at the Villisca, Iowa Church.

The delegates voted to continue their support for the Central Region's Joshua Project at $5 per member each year and to send $100 to the Joshua Project and $50 for the Mexico mission project. They urged the WHFMS locals to sponsor youth ministries in their churches.

Officers of the Conference are: President, Lorene Neal, Vice-president Ruth Stump, Secretary Grace Groves, and Treasurer Zola James. Plans are being made for a conference retreat.

Skit Presented at Smithfield

On WHFMS Sunday evening several ladies presented a skit titled "The Lord's Prayer." A ladies' trio presented special music and Gwen Spearing led the prayer time. They are encouraging all the ladies of the church and their friends to become involved in their monthly meetings of learning, caring, and sharing.

ENC Retreat

The Fall Retreat for Eastern North Carolina ladies was held at Camp Dixie and featured two video tapes by Tony Campolo. These were titled "Commitment — Getting Beyond Good Intentions" and "Discipleship — Living to the nth Degree." The retreat started on a Friday evening with dinner and an evening program including devotions by Lucille Wood and special music by Phyllis Toothman and the first video. The Bible study on Saturday morning was led by Palma Neal. The retreat committee was chaired by Ann Jackson assisted by Paula Jones, Mary Middlewood, and Lucille Wood.

World Day of Prayer

March 4, 1988

A litany for worship for the World Day of Prayer is prepared by the National Association of Evangelicals for use in our churches. Elma Henderson has written the guide for this year's theme "Follow God's Guidance." The three parts of the worship booklet may be used individually or as a whole. The three divisions are based on Jesus' words, "I Am the Way, I Am the Truth, and I Am the Life." You are encouraged to use the booklet as a guide for your own creative approach to this special occasion. Please use the order form below and request by February first, if possible.

. . . . . .

MAIL TO: National Association of Evangelicals
P.O. Box 28, Wheaton, IL 60189
Phone: 312-665-0500

Here is my materials order for the **WORLD DAY OF PRAYER.** Please ship:

_____ Worship guide booklets

_____ Posters

☐ We will receive an offering for the ministries of the National Association of Evangelicals.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ **Zip** _____

Alton Bay, New Hampshire

The fourth annual women's retreat of the Eastern Region WHFMS featured several timely workshops including: *Color Me Beautiful* by Ellie Cone, *Lifestyle Evangelism* by Kathie Keyes, *Help, I'm a Pastor's Wife* by Priscilla Taber, *How to Encourage my Pastor's Wife* by Pauline Johnson, and *Chemical Dependency — Impact on the Family* by Errol Hines. Other features of the two-day retreat included a candlelight banquet with guest speaker Andrea Turner, handcrafts directed by Leika Lucas, a Sunday morning challenge by Margaret Barton, Care/Share prayer groups, and free time. God through the Holy Spirit worked in the hearts of all who attended.

Junior Action Rally

Eighty-five lively juniors gathered at Camp Dixie for group activities and fellowship. Eastern North Carolina Junior Action Superintendent Virginia Yates planned the occasion which included a campfire on the hillside overlooking the lake where they sang choruses and roasted marshmallows. Various games were played with prizes awarded. The A.C. Sparkplugs, a puppet team from the Durham, North Carolina Church, gave a presentation during the devotional time. A trophy for the most juniors present went to the Stone's Creek Junior Action of Benson, North Carolina where Phyllis Barefoot and Barbara Norris are the leaders. Juniors from seven churches of the ENC Conference attended this overnight retreat.

To Be A Servant

WHFMS President Karen Anderson of Dover, New Hampshire challenged the congregation during the WHFMS Sunday evening celebration to be a "missionary" right where they are, to be true servants of Jesus Christ. At least ten women took an active part in the service. One man from the congregation joined three of the ladies in presenting the play "God's Servants: Frank and Susie Davis," with appropriate props and costumes. Shirley Hamilton sang several musical numbers. This dedicated group of women invited the ladies from Rochester, Portsmouth, and Northwood to be their guests at a covered dish supper with Eastern Region WHFMS President Barbara Schaeffner as the speaker.

Mission Prayer Partnership

January

19 **Praise** the Lord for **Dr. Roland Griswold**, past director of Church Expansion and for the valuable work that he has done for the Advent Christian denomination. Pray for him in his new service for the Lord.

20 **Praise** the Lord for twenty prison inmates in Chula Vista, Calif. who accepted the Lord under our missionary **Abel Garcia.**

21 **Praise** the Lord for new Bible studies being started in the **Philippines. Pray** that they will lead to new churches being started.

22 **Praise** the Lord for the establishment of Hispanic services by the **Carpentersville, Ill.** church. Pray for this important new ministry.

23 **Pray** for **Margaret Helms** as she begins leadership training with our churches in the Cebu area.

24 **Pray** for **David Vignali** as he begins service on the OBC Board and teaches Sunday school at Banilad.

25 **Pray** for **Alice Brown** and the tremendous responsibilities that she carries as director of Oro Bible College.

26 **Pray** for the students at **Oro Bible College** that God will provide for their spiritual and physical needs.

27 **Pray** for pastoral leadership for new Filipino churches that Advent Christians are establishing in the **Cebu** area.

28 **Pray** for **Frank** and **Judy Jewett** and their growing ministry in the San Vincente Fellowship. May God especially bless Judy on her birthday tomorrow.

29 **Pray** for Mexican missionary, **Arturo Angulo** who is celebrating his birthday today.

30 **Pray** for **Marion Damon** as she continues training eight young men for the pastoral ministry.

31 **Pray** for **Barbara White** and her work with the church at Kodaikanal in India.

Prayer Partnership

February

1 **Pray** for **Beryl Joy Hollis** as she encourages the churches in the Madras area.

2 **Pray** that God would provide the means to rebuild the church in **Manivaikkam, India** that was burned to the ground by Hindu fanatics.

3 **Pray** for our **retired missionaries** that God would continually bless and use them.

4 **Pray** for **David Northup** to have wisdom as he leads the General Conference Headquarters staff in its service for the Lord.

5 **Pray** for the **Missionary Advisory Committee** as they hold important meetings this weekend.

6 **Pray** for General Conference, **Don Wrigley** as he prepares to lead the Executive Council in their semi-annual meeting.

7 **Pray** for the **Devairakkams** and their growing ministry in Malaysia.

8 **Pray** for the **Devasahayams** and their outreach ministry in Malaysia.

9 **Pray** for perspective **missionary candidates** as they seek God's will for their service.

10 **Pray** for **Ever Perez** and **Alberto Gomez** in their ministry in Mexico.

11 **Pray** for **Dorothy** and **Austin Warriner,** that God would bless their ministry in Asukano.

12 **Pray** that the families of the women at **Asukano** will come to church and be active.

13 **Pray** for the **Cebu** churches to have pastoral leadership.

14 **Pray** for our **pastors** as they lead Advent Christian churches across Canada and the United States in worship today. Pray that God would mightily anoint and use them.

15 **Pray** for **Floyd** and **Musa Powers** as they assist and encourage the pastors in Japan.

16 **Pray** for **E.A. Akpan** and **E.P. Etuk-Akpan** as they care for the Nigerian Advent Christian work.

17 **Praise** the Lord for **missionary candidates** that the Lord will send to us to serve on our mission fields.

18 **Pray** for **Francis** and **Lyne Ssebikindu** in their work in Memphis and that the Lord would provide musical talent to assist in their worship services.

Witness talks with Ed Whitford **From page 11**

the atoning blood of Christ, the new birth, and the blessed hope.

As I studied Scripture, I found other questions that demanded answers. I became first of all a conditionalist. Then in regard in eschatology my thinking shifted to a more historical position.

As God led my wife and I into pastoral ministry, I was approached by the Advent Christian Church in North Scituate asking me if I would be interested in pastoral service. Not knowing anything about the Advent Christian Church, I asked them, where do we stand, what do we believe alike, and where do we differ. And I discovered that this church believed much like I do. So the door opened wide. Providentially, we had come to Rhode Island due to family needs. God used that move to put us into ministry with those of like faith. □

Growing or Just Changing **From page 13**

- Base your plans on both the expectations of your target and your own desired outcomes.
- Let your plans flow naturally from your purpose and objectives as a church.

Second, look at the obstacles and potentials for growth through spiritual evaluation: comparing what *is* with what *ought to be* for the purpose of determining areas for improvement, or directions for ministry.

In conclusion, if you are clear about what your reason for existing as a church is and you are equally clear about the way things around you really are, you then can work on translating these obstacles into stepping stones for growth. It may not be easy, but it will be exciting and rewarding. Read Paul's conclusion in 1 Corinthians 9:24-27. □

Roland Griswold has served the Advent Christian General Conference since 1969 first as Director of Youth Ministries and then as Director of Church Expansion.

How to Build a Strong Family **From page 23**

children being good and tell them. The results will astound you!

That's enough advice for today. It's time to "pound the pavement." First, commit yourself to the goal of a strong family. Then, with this plan of action in hand, move toward that goal. □

William Batson is pastor of the Portsmouth, New Hampshire Advent Christian Church and founder of "The Family Builders," an organization committed to strengthening family relationships. He and his wife, Cindy, have been married for fifteen years and have two daughters. This is the first in a series of bi-monthly columns.

How to Build a Strong Family

William Batson

Don't you love it when people tell you what's good for you? I've just returned from a pastoral call at the hospital where a volunteer dispensed a daily dosage of free advice. "Put on your sneakers and shorts and hit the pavement," she commanded. "Running will strengthen your body." I don't find fault with her advice. In fact, it's excellent. But, I didn't ask for it.

William Batson

As I write this column, I realize you didn't ask for my advice about family issues. However, that doesn't negate the value of what I will be sharing with you over the course of this series. Our families are important to us, and whatever we can do to strengthen them will have a positive affect on our world.

My friend at the hospital knows that it takes a plan of action to build a strong body. The same is true in strengthening the family. Because we have no plan, many of our families just limp along. We may be living together, but growing apart.

Correction

The words, "An expanded version of this article originally appeared in *Henceforth*, the Journal of the Faculty of Berkshire Christian College," were omitted from the article *Accommodation, Accommodation* (October 1987). We apologize for this error.

Let me share with you a simple blueprint that you can utilize right away for building a strong family. First, let the members of your family know that they have priority over those outside the family. This kind of commitment builds loyalty and devotion into the home. I heard Crawford Loritts of Atlanta tell of a weekend when he had to attend important meetings in Chicago. He assured his wife and children that if they needed him he would come back immediately. While at the meetings, a severe ice storm struck Atlanta causing power failures and accidents. Crawford called his wife to see how they were coping. She never complained, but he could tell she was concerned about the situation. He immediately left the meetings to return to Atlanta. Crawford said that when he walked into the house, his son met him with these words: "Daddy, you really meant what you said!" That kind of experience builds a strong family.

The next step is to spend time with your spouse and children. Time spent with family members indicates the intensity of our commitment to them as valuable persons. I've heard it said that it's not the quality but the quantity of time you spend with a person that is important. However, I have learned that my family members do not always have their problems on my "quality" time. It takes quantity, as well as quality, to develop lasting relationships.

Fathers are the most negligent in this area. A Cornell University study revealed that fathers spend an average of only 37 seconds a day with their children. No matter how first-rate the quality, that's not enough time. Look at your schedule to see how you can increase the quantity and quality of time spent with your family.

The third component in this family-building plan is to work at solving problems in the midst of crises. There is no such thing as a home without conflict. Marriages may be made in heaven, but the details are worked out on earth. In strong families, conflicts and crises are times when the members pull together in order not to be pulled apart by the imposing difficulties. With the Lord Jesus present in the family, and the Bible as our counsel, no conflict or problem is beyond solution.

The fourth element in our plan of action is to affirm the value of each of our family members. Expressions of sincere appreciation will strengthen any family relationship. We all want to be talked to, to have our existence recognized and to be told that we are appreciated. At Jesus' baptism, Mark records these words: "And a voice came from heaven: You are My Song, whom I love; with you I am well pleased" (Mark 1:11). Here God the Father meets three basic relational needs of Jesus: the need to belong, the need to be loved, and the need to be praised. These encouraging words strengthened an already strong family tie.

Improve your score in showing appreciation by listing the two best qualities of each family member. Make a date to be alone with them and communicate those qualities that you admire. Another family building idea is to catch your

Continued on page 22

Your Servants for Christ's Cause

International Missionaries

Philippines

Alice Brown (March 24)
Box 223
Cagayan de Oro City 8401
PHILIPPINES

Margaret Helms (September 18)
P.O. Box 263
Cebu City 6401
PHILIPPINES

Frank and Judy Jewett
(December 11 and January 29)
Danny Jewett (June 13, 1976)
Timmy Jewett (June 26, 1978)
Letitia Jewett (April 13, 1980)
P.O. Box 263
Cebu City 6401
PHILIPPINES

David Vignali (May 10)
P.O. Box 263
Cebu City 6401
PHILIPPINES

Japan

Floyd and Musa Powers
(October 8 and February 28)
Rebecca Powers (Nov. 11, 1971)
18 - 11- 4 Motoyama Kita cho
Higashinada ku, Kobe shi 658
JAPAN

Austin and Dorothy Warriner
(January 1 and January 18)
3-37 Okayama Higashi
5 Chome; Osaka Fu 575
JAPAN

India

Marion Damon (March 27)
Box 17, Andivilla
Kodaikanal 624101
INDIA

Beryl Joy Hollis (December 16)
American Advent Mission
Velacheri, Madras 600 042
INDIA

Barbara White (January 14)
Box 17, Andivilla
Kodaikanal 624101
INDIA

On Leave

Bessie Smith (March 27)
Box 657, Waukewan Street
Meredith, NH 03253

National Missionaries

Malaysia

Thambusamy and
[illegible]evairakkam
[illegible]ayang Housing Trust
[illegible]ng, Johor
[illegible]

[illegible]eulah Devasahayam
[illegible]mpaka
[illegible]bira
[illegible]ng, Selangor

Memphis

Francis and Lyne Ssebikindu
(May 13 and May 8)
Faith Nancy (September 28, 1982)
Ashley Grace (January 21, 1985)
2590 Faxon Avenue
Memphis, TN 38112

Mexico

Abel Garcia-Lara
368 Anita Street, Sp. 62
Chula Vista, CA 92011

Alberto Gomez
Arturo Angulo
Ever Perez
c/o Abel Garcia-Lara

Nigeria

E. A. Akpan—Superintendent
Nigerian Advent Christian Mission
P.O. Box 1642
Uyo; Akwa Ibom State
NIGERIA

Advent Christian General Conference
P.O. Box 23152
Charlotte, NC 28212

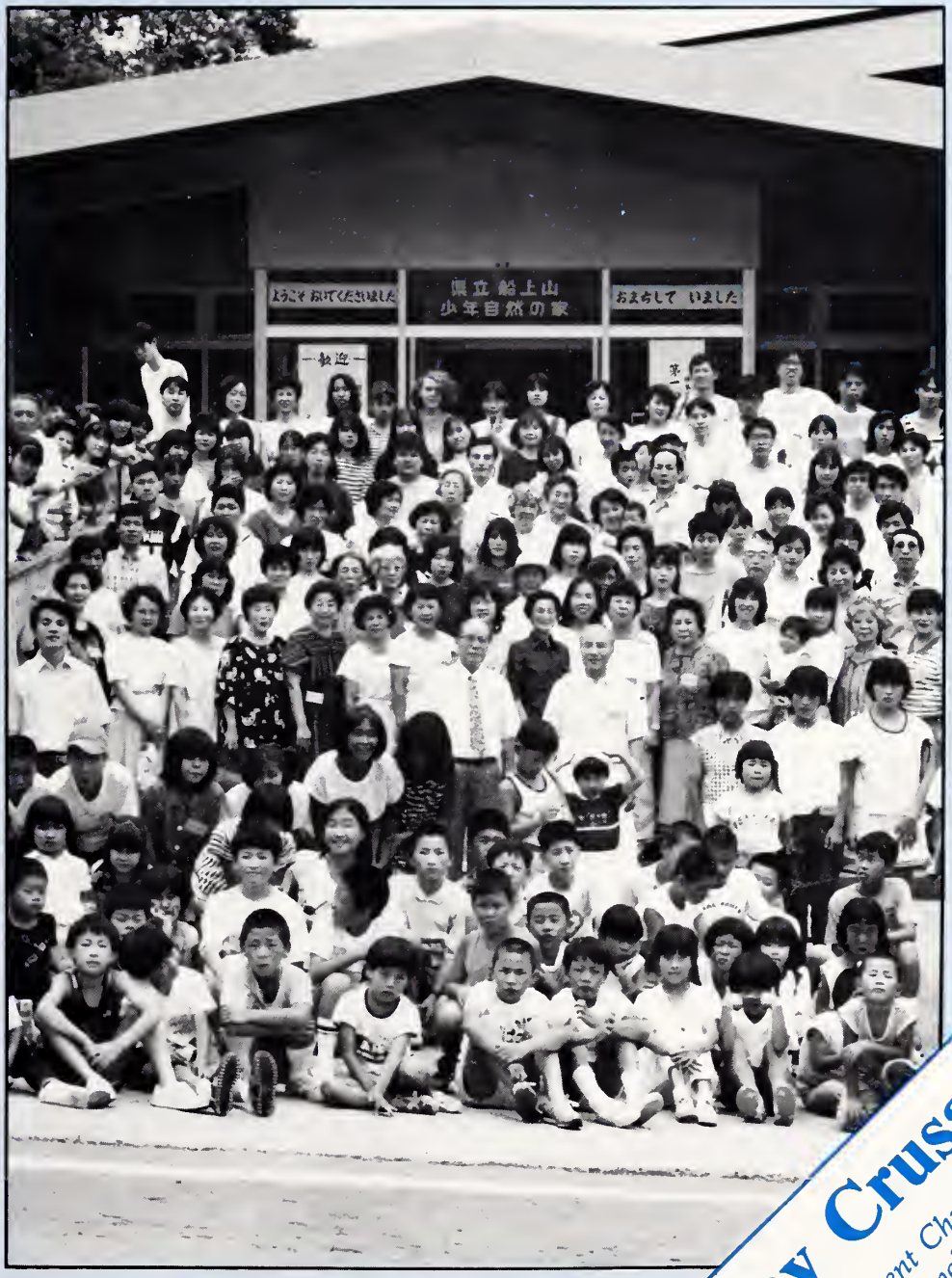
[illegible]rson; World Missions
[illegible]ld; Christian Education
[illegible]hael; Women's Ministries
Roland Griswold; Church Expansion
Robert W. Cole; Finance
Robert Mayer; Publications
David Northup; Executive Vice-president

6C04343
University of North Carolina
Serials Dept. Davis Library
030 A
Chapel Hill NC 27514

C286.7
A24

Advent Christian WITNESS

February 1988



Penny Crusade 1988

helping Advent Christians share Christ's gospel worldwide

FEATURES

Only 24 Hours to Live? 4

Loudell Alley recounts how God healed her of cancer and ministered to her in time of need.

Mission Director Makes First Trip to Japan and Philippines 6

In this exclusive Advent Christian Witness interview, World Missions Director Harold Patterson shares his impressions of Advent Christian missions ministry in Japan and the Philippines.

Five Keys to Advent Christian Renewal 8

Pastor Bruce Burks calls us to make prayer, worship, openness to God's spirit, holiness, and concern for reaching the lost the focus of our Christian lives.

Penny Crusade 1988 11

Our annual look at how Advent Christians support evangelism, church planting, and missions ministries around the world.

Church Leader Serves Christ in the Philippines 16

Graciano Villadolid represented the Philippine Advent Christian Conference last year at General Conference in Charleston, West Virginia. Author Ralph Dodge provides a glimpse at Graciano's life and ministry.

DEPARTMENTS

From the Editor 3

Women's Ministries 18

Prayer Partnership 21

Opinion 23

Penny Crusade 1988 means support for Advent Christian missions worldwide. The cover photo shows some of the 257 Japanese Advent Christians who gathered for worship, training, and fellowship at a recent campmeeting.

Volume 36 Number 2

Advent Christian WITNESS

Editor **Robert Mayer**

Contributing Editors **Caroline Michael, Harold Patterson, William Batson, Clayton Blackstone, David McCarthy**

Art Director **Linda Perault**

Typesetting **Susan Gettis**

The **Advent Christian Witness** is published monthly except for a combined July-August issue by the Advent Christian General Conference of America. As the offical publication of the Advent Christian General Conference, the Advent Christian Witness publishes the teachings of the Advent Christian Church and promotes the task of evangelism in North America and throughout the world. The views expressed in this magazine are those of the author and may not necessarily reflect those of the editor or the Advent Christian General Conference.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Advent Christian Witness, P.O. Box 23152, Charlotte, NC 28212. Rates in the United States and Canada: One year, $11.00. Single copy: $1.00. Overseas rate: One year $14.00. Member: Evangelical Press Association.

Copyright © 1988 by the Advent Christian General Conference of America, Inc.

FROM THE EDITOR

Does Freedom of Speech Apply to Churches?

Abortion is the most devisive issue in politics today. Not since the debate over slavery in the 1800s has an issue so divided the American people. Since the 1973 Roe vs. Wade decision, the United States Supreme Court has held that abortion is a private matter between a woman and her physician and that states have no right to legislate its practice.

The National Association of Evangelicals, the National Catholic Bishop's Conference, the Christian Action Council, and a host of other religious groups find the court's logic a reprehensible denial of the sanctity of human life. They have spoken passionately against the practice of abortion and have worked to influence legislation, bring legal action, and support political candidates in an effort to stop abortion on demand.

That's the American way. The first amendment to the United States Constitution guarantees citizens and organizations the right to speak and influence their government. That principle applies to churches too; right? Not if the Supreme Court decides in favor of pro-abortion groups in the lawsuit they have brought against the U.S. Catholic Conference and the National Conference of Catholic Bishops.

Because these two Roman Catholic organizations have actively lobbied for anti-abortion legislation, several pro-abortion organizations have asked for legal standing to sue the Internal Revenue Service over the church's tax exemption. The suit seeks:

- Revocation of Roman Catholic Church's tax exemption
- Payment of millions of dollars in back taxes
- An order that church donations are not tax deductible

The goal of pro-abortion organizations is clear: Restrict the free speech of religious organizations opposed to abortion by hitting them where it hurts; in the pocketbook. Abortion Rights Mobilization attorney Marshall Beli stated in *USA Today*, "We're confident the court will decide in our favor."

If he's right, the effect on the free speech of religious organizations like the Advent Christian General Conference could be chilling. Churches and religious organizations throughout our land could be faced with speaking about issues from a Christian perspective at great financial risk.

And who will decide which religious activity is tax deductible and which is not? Will the IRS revoke the tax exemption of the Advent Christian General Conference if your editor addresses a controversial issue on this page?

Churches and religious organizations have the same right to speak and lobby as other non-profit organizations. The Christian faith mandates believers to bring Christian principles to bear on the great concerns of our time. For two hundred years, Christian moral and ethical values have given this nation a compass to guide her actions and thinking. I hope the court will realize this as they deliberate on this potentially explosive decision. □

Only 24 Hours to Live?

Loudell Alley

My story begins in March of 1984. I was 17 years old and a senior in high school. I thought everything was going great, but as I found out things don't always go like you expect them to.

It all began on Monday, March 12. I got up to get ready for school, showered, dressed, and did my hair — something that I did everyday. I went to get breakfast, but I couldn't eat because my stomach didn't feel well. When I went back to bed, my Mom asked if I was going to school. I told her that I didn't feel well and I stayed in bed all day.

An unexplained illness

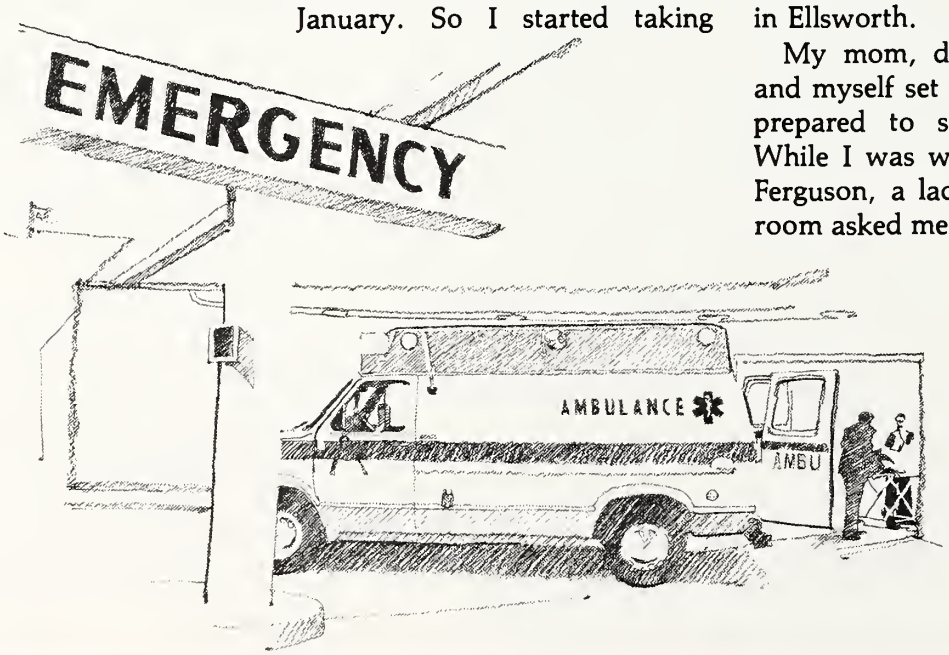
On Tuesday, March 13, I still didn't feel like eating. My stomach had begun growing quite a bit, but I didn't think much of it. My Mom and I thought my problem was gastritis, which I had back in January. So I started taking medication, but it didn't seem to help.

On Wednesday, I still didn't feel well. I couldn't eat. I had put on a lot of weight by now and I looked nine months pregnant. My Mom called my doctor in Jonesport and made an appointment for me on the following day. I was very uncomfortable — my back ached and my stomach was sore.

On Thursday, March 15, I went to see the doctor. He examined me, took some tests, and measured my waist. I had grown between six and nine inches! He told us that he thought I might be having a false pregnancy. He thought that to be certain he should schedule an ultrasound for Friday morning at the Machias Hospital.

I had the ultrasound done Friday, and then went back to my doctor in Jonesport to discuss the results. Although he still felt that I had a false pregnancy, he made arrangements for me to see Dr. Karen Ferguson, a gynecologist, in Ellsworth.

My mom, dad, grandmother and myself set out for Ellsworth prepared to spend the night. While I was waiting to see Dr. Ferguson, a lady in the waiting room asked me if I was overdue.



When I told her that I wasn't pregnant she became embarrassed and felt bad. Dr. Ferguson gave me another ultrasound. She also believed that I had a false pregnancy. I was admitted to the hospital and was scheduled to be operated on around five o'clock that afternoon.

Facing cancer

My doctor told me that I would feel a lot better after surgery. I was prepped and taken to the operating room.

During surgery, Dr. Ferguson discovered that my situation was more severe than simply having a false pregnancy. She never completed the operation but took my Mom and Dad into a quiet room to talk.

She told them that I had cancer and that it had spread throughout my body into my ovaries, tubes, kidneys, and liver. She also told them that there was nothing she could do for me, but that there was a doctor in Portland that might be able to help.

I was immediately transported by ambulance from Ellsworth to Portland. My mom and a registered nurse went in the ambulance with me while my dad and grandmother followed behind us in the car. Although I don't remember much about the ambulance ride, I do remember that I was given oxygen and that I had a catheter and two I.V.'s.

I also remember the nurse wetting my mouth with a damp gauze pad to help my thirst because I wasn't allowed anything to drink. My mom and the nurse took turns holding and rubbing my hand. When we went through Augusta, the driver had to turn the siren on. I wanted to sit up and watch where we were going, but I wasn't able to.

Only 24 hours to live

We arrived at the Maine Medical Center in Portland at 10 o'clock that night — about a half hour before my dad and grandmother. I was taken into the emergency room where a number of tests were done. My new physician, Dr. Charles Boyce, told my mom and dad

Loudell Alley

that if what was shown in my records was true, I would have only 24 hours to live. All that he could do was to make me as comfortable as possible.

But, if I could make it past those twenty-four hours, then maybe something could be done. The tests they took revealed a tumor that had been growing for 22 weeks with a lot of fluid. They tried to remove this fluid before my surgery with a long tube and needle inserted through my stomach, but they couldn't do it. So they decided to wait and remove the fluid during surgery.

Rev. George Woodward, pastor of the Chelsea Advent Christian Church and a native of Beals, came to the hospital at my mom's request. He prayed with me before surgery and stayed with my family until after I was out of the operating room.

I was operated on at two o'clock Saturday morning, March 17. Dr. Boyce removed almost two gallons of fluid, my right ovary and tube, and a tumor as big as a basketball.

Four days after surgery, Dr. Boyce told my parents and I that I was going to be fine. Tests showed that the tumor was benign and I would be able to go home on Friday.

A miracle occurs

Even though this all sounds straight forward, I experienced a lot of confusion and fear because so much had happened in such a short period of time. I don't recall being afraid myself, though, because I didn't know what was happening. I wasn't told anything about my condition until everything was over.

What I learned later was that a miracle had been performed while I was traveling in the ambulance from Ellsworth to Portland. The cancer that Dr. Ferguson had found spread throughout my body, God had gathered together in a ball which Dr. Boyce was able to remove.

The many prayers that were offered up on my behalf were important in my healing. The people in my home church had a special prayer vigil for me. There

Continued on page 23

an interview with Harold Patterson

Mission Director Makes First Trip to Japan and Philippines

Last November, World Missions Director Harold Patterson journeyed to Japan and the Philippines to meet with Advent Christian missionaries, confer with national leadership, and assess the needs of Advent Christian Missions in those two countries. The Advent Christian Witness asked Rev. Patterson for his impressions of his first overseas visit to these two Advent Christian mission fields.

Harold Patterson meets with Japan Advent Christian Conference leaders.

Harold, you've just returned from your first visit to Japan and the Philippines. How did that trip affect your understanding of Advent Christian Missions?

Bob, I was surprised at how much my understanding of these fields increased by my actually visiting them. I expected to come back with knowledge, but I found my experience was more than that. Before my trip I interviewed in depth our missionaries on furlough about their field and their work. I gained knowledge of the fields by reading history and correspondence.

But experience of actually visiting the country, seeing its culture, talking with the national leadership, meeting with all the missionaries on the field together for frank discussion, seeing the cultural stresses our missionaries face; all these things gave me a much greater understanding of what Advent Christian missionaries experience in Japan and the Philippines.

You traveled in areas of the Philippines where Communist and Muslim insurgents are active. Did you sense any danger?

No, I cannot say that I sensed any personal danger. I did visit areas where Communist activity has been reported. There were churches in rural areas that I was advised not to visit, or if I visited not to stay overnight. I did not have any experiences that placed me in or gave me a sense of personal danger.

After spending time with Filipino Advent Christian leaders, how would you evaluate the political situation in the Philippines?

It's complex and at times intense. The numbers of committed Communist and Muslim guerillas appear small but they are aided by thousands of deprived and concerned people. Newspapers in the Philippines carried stories of people surrendering to government authorities seeking asylum.

The key issue is terrorism. No one knows where the next attack might come, and therefore a small number of terrorists can impact a large area. It's interesting in talking with missionaries and national leaders to find they are far more concerned about a right-wing military coup than a Communist take-over.

I saw a lot of new construction in the Philippines; new large buildings and expansion of businesses. It certainly didn't look like a country expecting to fall into Communist hands. People seemed optimistic and yet they showed a cautious concern that there were those around listening who might not be trusted.

Are Filipino people receptive to the Christian faith?

Filipinos are a very religious people. They have been for centuries. Given the political uncertainty, I sensed a great hunger for knowledge of Scripture. It's hard to imagine here in America going into a bank, as I did with Advent Christian missionary Frank Jewett, and have people ask us to start a Bible study in the bank. Frank told me that he has more opportunities to start Bible studies than he could

handle. People are anxious to talk about the Bible, to learn what it has to say for them. The Philippines is one of the most open areas in the world for evangelization and the sharing of the Christian faith.

In your discussion with missionaries and national leaders, what do you perceive as the Filipino believers' greatest concerns and needs?

The missionaries and the nationals differ at this point, I believe. The missionaries are concerned with providing great trained leadership for the church, the discipleship of new Christians, and equipping believers to start Bible studies. The national leadership believes that they can handle these tasks effectively themselves. They're primarily concerned about greater financial support, so they can pay their pastors better and effectively carry out their programs. Our desire as a mission agency is to work with them in whatever ways God leads to achieve the greatest outreach of the gospel.

You also visited Japan. What were your impressions?

Japan has become an affluent, westernized nation especially in the cities. I found the Japanese people pleasant, polite, and eager to please. There seemed to be a real respect for Americans and especially missionaries. I found our Japanese Advent Christian Conference and churches to be led by capable, spiritual leaders with a vision for evangelism. They seek to double the number of churches in their conference and their church membership in the next five years. Conference leaders have a view for reaching the world for Christ.

Many American Christians have the perception that it's difficult to reach the Japanese with the gospel. Is that a fair assessment?

The fact remains that out of 120 million Japanese people, only one percent are Christians of any persuasion, and so it still remains one of the most difficult mission fields in the world. I did find that Japanese Christians, because many of them have risen to places of leadership with Japanese society, exercise a far greater influence for Christianity than their numbers would normally indicate. Many Japanese people are eager to learn English are open to English classes when the Bible is used as the text, and open to at least give the Christian faith a fair hearing.

What similiarities and differences did you find between Japanese and American life?

I was struck by the similiarity in dress, interests, high technology, and American-style business enterprises. I even ate at McDonald's while I was there. The Japanese, like Americans, are very busy people with hectic schedules.

Japanese people still have a respectful and polite way of treating each other. I saw respect for me as a guest in their country. The Japanese seem eager to give rather than to take.

I found in the Japanese Advent Christian churches a great depth of prayer and strong commitment to the Christian faith. Believers get up early in the morning to pray for revival in their church. People are willing to sacrifice a great deal to establish new churches so the gospel can be preached.

Japan and the Philippines are two of the more established Advent Christian mission fields. Are missionaries still needed in both lands?

Yes. That "yes" is a stronger one than I would have given you before I visited the field. There are great opportunities to reach people for Christ.

We need those who would be willing to do that. Japanese leaders told me that in some ways its easier for the American missionaries to plant churches because of the respect the Japanese people have for foreigners who demonstrate a caring attitude and a willingness to listen.

Missionaries are needed in the Philippines, I believe, to expand the work for much the same reason. There are those who are attracted to missionaries and willing to listen to them. The opportunities to start new churches and to reach people for Christ makes it an imperative to send missionaries to the Philippines as soon as we can.

What are some experiences that stand out as you reflect on your first overseas trip?

It's hard in a few words to describe all that I experienced. I visited the Buddhist temples, Shinto shrines, and Hare Krishna temples. I saw new houses of worship the Jehovah's Witnesses and Mormons are building.

I sang "Amazing Grace" with an Advent Christian congregation most of whom have only been followers of Jesus Christ less than one year. I saw Japanese believers sing the hymns of faith with tears on their cheeks. I prayed with them for the salvation of friends and relatives.

I was touched beyond words when one new Philippine Advent Christian congregation, comprised of people who perhaps make only about a dollar a day, managed to without knowledge of the mis-

Continued on page 22

Can the Advent Christian denomination prosper in the 21st century?

Five Keys to Advent Christian Renewal

Bruce Burks

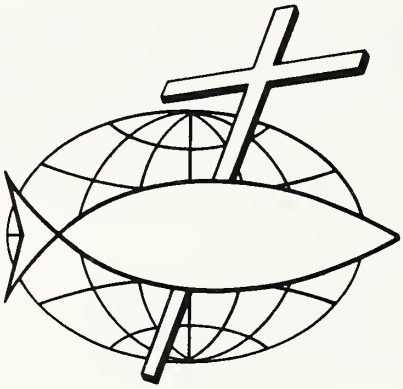
I am and ever will be an Advent Christian. I believe we have a portion of God's truth which must be preached in earnest. I love the Advent Christian Church.

One of nature's unwritten laws is the survival of the fittest. Only those creatures who have strength, endurance, and sharp instincts will survive the harsh difficulties they face.

I was shocked, as many were, to hear the news at last year's General Conference meetings that our denomination's membership has dropped to 20,000 nationally. I knew we had declined over the past decade, but I had no idea the situation was that drastic.

Since General Conference, I've thought about what must be done to reverse this trend. How can we survive, grow, and prosper? I don't pretend to have all the answers, but I would like to make several suggestions. There's no need to point fingers or lay the blame on anyone else. Each of us bears responsibility and must do our part to turn the tide of decline by responding to God's voice and by obeying His Word.

Change can only come as God works in individuals and local



churches. I believe we can find *some* answers in the example of the Syrian Antioch Church in Acts 13.

"In the church at Antioch there were prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen (who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch) and Saul. While they were worshipping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, 'Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.' So after they had fasted and prayed they placed their hands on them and sent them off" (Acts 13:1-3).

Learning to worship

We must learn to worship God. God's call to set apart Paul and Barnabas didn't come to those prophets and teachers during brainstorming sessions, long-range planning meetings, or through committees and seminars, but while they were worshipping God!

They were "ministering to the Lord and fasting." They were praising God and exalting Him, perhaps singing and sharing Scripture and testimonies of praise. As they did that, how do you suppose the Holy Spirit spoke? I believe it was through one of them. Perhaps, through words of prophecy, led by the Spirit, one said, "God says, 'Set apart for me...' "

We've forgotten how to worship God. We have become spectators instead of participants. We watch the choir, soloist, worship leader, and pastor perform while we sit back, expecting them to move us closer to God. But we are not the objects of worship, God is! We must direct our attention to Him who deserves all glory, honor, and praise.

God delights in His people. He inhabits the praise of His people. Harry Causey, at a worship seminar in Lenox, Massachusetts, pointed out that true worshippers whom God seeks to worship Him are abandoned to the control of the Holy Spirit, who directs our worship. If the Holy Spirit is in control, He will touch and transform lives and give us direction. We must direct our attention off of ourselves and what we can get

out of service and prayer and on to God.

Making prayer a priority

We must learn to pray. We do not necessarily need to learn *how* to pray; there are plenty of writings on that subject; but we must learn to pray. After the Holy Spirit spoke, these leaders didn't jump up and pack for Paul and Barnabas.

They entered into more prayer and fasting. They confirmed the leading of God through prayer. I believe they prayed for further direction; asking what work they were to do and where they were to go. They also prayed, I'm sure, for the success of their work, batheing the whole matter in much fervent prayer.

We know we should pray, but not many of us are very serious pray-ers. We are people who pray at certain times, for certain causes, but not many of us are people of prayer, prayer warriors, and intercessors.

I believe the highest calling of God is to be an intercessor; one who will sacrifice time, energy, and effort in crying out to God for His work, for His people, for the lost, and for our nation and world. We need to be world Christians, not just concerned about ourselves and our surroundings; praying "God bless Aunt Rose, and help our church to grow." This isn't wrong, but neither is it enough. We need to be mindful of God's work throughout the world, having His concerns, His vision.

And if we are going to faithfully intercede for God's people and God's work, it takes time. It takes time to learn about needs and consistent time spent in earnest prayer. It's easy for us to say something is wrong or that our leaders aren't doing what they should, but are you praying for them by name? Are you praying for the budget? Are you praying for our missionaries by name? Of course, as we pray, we must also be willing to be part of the answer through going, giving, and service.

Openness to God's Spirit

We must be open to the Holy Spirit. I'm afraid this call of God to Barnabas and Saul would have never happened in many of our churches today. They were open to the Holy Spirit's control; abandoned to Him; seeking God with all their hearts; and expecting Him to move and speak. They weren't closed to spiritual gifts like prophecy, tongues, and a host of others, as many of us are. I'm not advocating those things by themselves, but we must allow the Holy Spirit to work, move, and speak however He desires or deems necessary.

Too many of our churches are closed to and afraid of the Holy Spirit. The Director of World Missions, Harold Patterson, and I were discussing our denomination's decline in comparison with mission works which are growing and prospering. We wondered what the difference was. Hal pointed out that one of the primary reasons for growth and prosperity on the mission field was openness to the Holy Spirit. They aren't afraid to submit to the Holy Spirit or His work.

Another Advent Christian recently said to me, "We're going to die as a denomination if we don't open up the Holy Spirit." I agree. Perhaps in our past we have suffered from a lack of truth, or truth out of balance, in regard to the Holy Spirit. The "charismatic" movement has even led to division in some of our churches.

Still, does that mean we should shut ourselves off from the Holy Spirit? No! That would be like "throwing the baby out with the bath water." We need to recognize the Holy Spirit's place in our churches and let Him have His way!

Pursuing a holy life

Another aspect of being open to and led by the Holy Spirit is the pursuit of holiness. Sin grieves and quenches the Holy Spirit and we cannot afford that. We must be "imitators of God."

Developing a spirit of sacrifice

We must be mission-minded. I believe this call to Paul and Barnabas came out of a burden for missions. Perhaps they asked God to raise up missionaries. Maybe they were praying for those cities to which Barnabas and Saul were sent. Certainly, these people were mission-minded. They were burdened for the lost.

We've had spurts of this from time to time and we have some who are genuinely mission-minded. But, for the most part I

Continued on next page

believe we are inwardly-focused people, trying to maintain our feeble existence.

Pastor Clio Thomas, in his message to the General Conference delegates declared, "We are not declining because we are sacrificing ourselves, but because of lethargy." We must spend ourselves, give ourselves away for the cause of Christ. Not only should we go all out for world missions, but locally we must spend and be spent for the lost of our communities. We must become friendly, open, and caring Advent Christian churches.

We, the Advent Christian Church, must learn to worship God, pray, be open to the Holy Spirit, and be mission-minded. It's easy to say, "Yes, they should," but we can't determine what others will do. Each of us must be personally committed to learning to worship God, learning to pray and being open and responsive to the Holy Spirit in our lives, and becoming world Christians.

Each of us can be the instrument of revival in our churches. It's up to you and me. May God grant that we become fit, not only for survival, but for growth and future ministry until Jesus comes! □

Bruce Burks is pastor of the Vernon, Vermont Advent Christian Church.

Because He Loved Us First

Scott Linscott

Most people hate to be preached to. I think it's because a lot of people tend to tell others about Jesus with this attitude, "I'm better than you and this is what you need to do to shape up."

The disciple John said something pretty interesting in 1 John 4:19, "We love because He first loved us." Think of all the things John could have written here behind "because"

- He healed people
- He knew what He was talking about
- He said He was God's Son
- He did miracles

It's true that Jesus did all those things but that isn't why the disciples loved Him. They loved Him because He loved them first.

That's pretty tough to do...love someone when they don't give a hoot about you.We usually love people on a mutual basis — "If you love me, I'll love you." Jesus put it a different way, "If you love me, I'll love you. If you hate me, I'll love you. If you kill me, I'll love you."

We can preach to our friends all day long but unless we show love it's all a waste of time. We need to invest in them with our acceptance, understanding, encouragement, and concern even when they're driving us crazy.

Jesus accepted a lot of scummy people — thieves, prostitutes, cheats, and others. He *never* joined in with what they were doing or supported their sin, but he *always* listened and responded the truth in love.

We get into religious arguments, get angry at our friends, and then stay mad at them for a few days. Think what that does to their impression of Christianity! That spells it out to them this way, "I will love you and be nice to you as long as you do things my way and think my way." That's *not* even close to the Gospel that Jesus presented!

When people attacked Jesus, did He attack them back? Read the 23rd chapter of Luke. Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they're doing." When Jesus was hanging on the cross, in tremendous pain, gasping for every breath he *prayed for the people who were trying to hurt him!* He didn't say, "You guys will be sorry when I send you all to hell! Ha, ha, I can't wait to see that."

How can you introduce friends to Jesus? Love them. Pray for them. Don't let yourself be dragged into their attack games. Serve them even when they don't deserve it. Realize that they don't know what they're doing or saying because they don't understand what Jesus did. Be patient. Endure the pain without striking back.

Easy, huh? No way. It takes power; power that you have if you'll only use it. "For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit, of love and of self-discipline" (2 Tim. 1:7).

Don't let your heart be hardened. □

Scott Linscott is Youth Pastor at New Life Advent Christian Fellowship in Biddeford, Maine. This article from the Youth Newsletter of New Life Fellowship.

Penny Crusade
1988

Advent Christian Missions Returns to Mexico

Let Us All Give, That Others Might Hear and Be Saved

A noted pastor and author has written a book reminding us of the peak to peek principle. That is as we climb one mountain peak we get a peek of a new peak. Life is a challenge to continue to climb upward and conquer new peaks. As Advent Christians, we have climbed some notable "peaks" in Penny Crusade in the last couple of years. We climbed to $225,000 and $250,000 and $275,000 and now I will give you a "peek" at our next goal, $300,000. This will be a great challenge for us in 1988.

Someone once said to me, "Penny Crusade is the singular most successful fund raising program we have ever had." Whether you agree with that or not certainly Penny Crusade is important! It is *important* because of its level of support where now fifty percent of our mission budget is raised through the Penny Crusade. It is important for our continued growth, for obviously if we are going to expand the work of Advent Christian Missions, Penny Crusade giving must continue to expand. It is *important* to us in teaching children about missions. With the emphasis of Penny Crusade in the Sunday School this is the first and sometimes only real emphasis in teaching on missions in our churches. It is *important* to us to have all share together whether it is a little child with his or her pennies or an adult with their dollars and checks, all may share in sharing the gospel around the world. It is *important* to give a sense of all working together to promote missions in the church. Penny Crusade is our most effective tool for missionary giving.

Goals are important! People love to break goals. Let me suggest some sample goals to you. One percent of our total goal = $3,000.00. A dollar for every year =$1,988. A penny for every mile around the world = $250.00. Whatever you do, may I especially ask you to raise at least ten percent more than you raised last year in order that we might meet the new challenges and opportunities that are coming to us to expand Advent Christian Missions.

People often ask me, "What can we do that can be different or challenging for Penny Crusade?" Creative ideas and leadership are especially important in promoting Penny Crusade. Here are a few successful ideas:

- A community supper
- Ice cream socials after church
- Walk or Rock-a-thons
- Giving your weight in pennies
- Putting on plays or special programs
- Challenging other Sunday School classes or other churches

The ideas are limited only by one's imagination. Try something different this year!

May the Lord give you a great vision and courage to climb the "peak" of your choice. Together let us conquer the "peak" of $300,000 for the expansion of Advent Christian Missions in 1988.

Yours and His for World Evangelism,

Harold R. Patterson

Harold R. Patterson, Director
Department of World Missions

Join Us In Another Record Breaking Penny Crusade!

1987 Penny Crusade Report

$5,000 and over

North Park, San Diego, CA	11,400.00
Blake's Chapel, Hampstead, NC	6,950.00
Aurora, IL	6,230.02
Bixler Memorial, Dowling Park, FL	5,500.00
Clendenin, WV	5,000.00

$3,000.00 and over

Seattle, WA	4,207.37
Oak Hill Bible, Oxford, MA	4,137.33
Portsmouth, NH	4,015.00
Lowry Park, Tampa, FL	3,612.84
Portland, Milwaukie, OR	3,300.00
Santa Cruz, CA	3,133.44
Hope, Chicago, IL	3,114.54
Elmore Memorial, Charleston, WV	3,000.00

$2,000 and over

Torrington, CT	2,819.58
First, Lenoir, NC	2,818.69
Stone's Creek, Benson, NC	2,736.95
Calvary B., Meredith, NH	2,728.22
Tabernacle, Lenoir, NC	2,694.83
Bangor, ME	2,600.00
Alton Bay, NH	2,575.00
Faith, Melrose, MA	2,521.92
West Jax, FL	2,500.00
Bear River, NS	2,433.86
Berea Smoaks, SC	2,422.00
North Scituate, RI	2,400.00
Highlands, LaGrange, IL	2,388.10
Vernon, VT	2,332.00
Valley, Arleta, CA	2,322.58
Friendship, ME	2,273.96
Fellowship, Taylorsville, NC	2,218.36
Central, Lenoir, NC	2,155.56
Princeton, WV	2,134.80
Goodwin's Mills, ME	2,100.00
Minton's Chapel, Kite, GA	2,059.51
Pleasant Hill, Linden, NC	2,017.91
Blessed Hope, Springfield, MA	2,013.42
Garner, NC	2,000.00
United, Wilmington, NC	2,000.00

$1,000.00 and over

Nooksack, WA	1,943.80
Littleton, NH	1,807.28
Auburn, ME	1806.12
Savannah Chapel, Bishopville, SC	1,784.16
Blue Creek, WV	1,709.28
Lone Star, VA	1,698.56
DeKalb, IL	1,668.50
Buckhead, Smoaks, SC	1,665.50
Ashland, ME	1,622.47
Magnolia, Evansville, WI	1,600.00
Sylvester, Mecosta, MI	1,597.00
Rockbridge, OH	1,581.34
Wallingford, CT	1,577.35
Charleston, First, WV	1,565.71
North Springfield, VT	1,950.00
Clovis, NM	1,505.34
Concord, NH	1,500.00
Bethel, Manchester, NH	1,500.00
Tustin, CA	1,500.00
Friendship, Jacksonville, FL	1,500.00
Prophetstown, IL	1,500.00
Durham, NC	1,461.36
First, Lake City, FL	1,410.28
Dulin's Grove, Charlotte, NC	1,385.93
Westfield, MA	1,368.55
Blessed Hope, Waterville, ME	1,366.53
West Head, NS	1,361.88
Hope, N. Darmouth, MA	1,350.00
Walnut Park, AL	1338.71
Attleboro, MA	1,336.22
Bristol, CT	1,316.23
Blessed Hope, Centerline, MI	1,316.00
Brays, Iberia, MO	1,315.37
First, Augusta, GA	1,300.00
Faith, Windsor, CT	1,294.49
West Wareham, MA	1,290.61
Sumas, WA	1,277.10
Medford, OR	1,275.00
West Bay, Panama City, FL	1,250.00
Massena, NY	1,243.77
Watertown, WI	1,240.00
State Road, Presque Isle, ME	1,239.50
West Chapman, Mapleton, ME	1,218.19
Riverside, Fort Worth, TX	1,207.05
Sunshine, Deer Isle, ME	1,204.10
Beals, ME	1,203.07
Bonita, LaVerne, CA	1,200.00
Calvary, Lenoir, NC	1,200.00
Fall River, MA	1,200.00
N. Hope, Whitefield, NH	1,200.00
Clear Fork, WV	1,200.00
Potter's Hill, NC	1,176.06
McAlpin, FL	1,171.25
Dunntown, Washburn, ME	1,166.21
Colton, OR	1,154.56
Morganton, NC	1,150.00
Loudon Ridge, NH	1,138.12
Oxford, ME	1,120.29
Portland, ME	1,112.72
First, Hickory, NC	1,108.27
Hickory Grove, NC	1,100.00
Dover, NH	1,100.00
Elk Valley, Charleston, WV	1,095.67
Emmanuel, Rochester, WV	1,086.00
Crouseville, ME	1,064.07
Middle Simonds, NB	1,063.56
Bear Point, NS	1,052.40
Faith, Plainville, CT	1,045.13
Bellingham, WA	1,028.98
Stratford, CT	1,022.31
Holly Grove, Benson, NC	1,019.36
Waynesboro, VA	1,010.00
Carpentersville, IL	1,000.00
Banner Chapel, Benson, NC	1,000.00
Hartsville, SC	1,000.00
Mt. Moriah, Henryville, IN	1,000.00

$500.00 and over

Galesburg, IL	970.13
Charleston, SC	950.00
Morrisville, VT	936.38
Beachville, FL	908.11
Creston, Seville, OH	880.27
Hope, Lynnwood, WA	860.47
New Hope, Waycross, GA	849.00
Hollandale, Spring Lake, NC	846.12
Chetek, WI	818.92
Gainesville, FL	813.00
Bristow, OK	804.80
Cooper's Creek, WV	800.06
Margaretville, NY	800.00
Hickory Grove, SC	800.00
Pleasant Hill, Fort Worth, TX	800.00
Brunswick, GA	793.37
Ballwin, MO	788.15
Shiloh, Monroe, NC	787.20
Farmington, NH	783.18
Salem, Mt. Olive, NC	775.94
Beaver Creek, NC	768.96
Millville, Panama City, FL	753.55
Nazareth, Lenoir, NC	750.00
Dover, FL	737.06
Stevenson, AL	712.77
Middle Sound, Wilmington, NC	707.53
Adria, N. Tazewell, VA	701.60
Chelsea, ME	700.00
E. Buffalo, Tampa, FL	700.00
Fayetteville, NC	683.80
Claiborne, OH	677.99

1988 Penny Crusade Goal

$300,000.00

1987 Penny Crusade Report

Perrin, TX	677.50
Columbus, OH	677.33
Haverhill, MA	669.11
Clovis, Fresno, CA	653.39
Blessed Hope, Glen St. Mary, FL	646.20
Myrtle Grove, Wilmington, NC	636.42
Lewiston, ID	632.09
Danville, Que.	626.75
Center Haverhill, NH	617.63
Stantontown, OH	608.85
Carr, FL	608.30
C.C., Oakland, CA	606.35
Long's Grove, Monroe, NC	600.62
Mt. Liberty, OH	600.05
Jasper, FL	600.00
Bethel, Lenoir, NC	600.00
First, Wilmington, NC	600.00
East Norwalk, CT	587.21
Concord, NH	582.83
Newhall, WV	582.34
Minturn, ME	580.80
Pembroke, GA	565.27
Ridgeland, SC	562.98
Pittsfield, NH	551.30
Pasadena, CA	529.00
Southside, Jacksonville, FL	521.08
First, Gadsden, AL	512.41

$300 and over

Parkside, San Francisco, CA	446.29
Newport Center, VT	443.45
Elkton, MD	438.20
Bridgton, ME	431.32
East War, WV	410.38
Palmer, IL	410.00
Ottervale, WV	400.00
Mills Memorial, NC	387.42
LaValle, WI	387.25
Stone Mountain, GA	380.73
Chillum, MD	371.89
Northwood Narrows, NH	367.55
Hope, Savannah, GA	354.25
Liberty, WV	350.00
Alley's Bay, ME	345.00
Mt. Pleasant, Memorial, NC	324.87
Council Valley, OK	319.19
Mendota, IL	305.96
Castle Hayne, NC	302.15
Swainsboro, GA	300.00
Boone, NC	300.00

$200.00 and over

Cary, NC	294.40
Mechanic Falls, ME	275.00
Ephesus, FL	260.00
O'Brion, WV	260.00
Hickory Grove, MO	259.11
Berea, Lenoir, NC	250.76
Barbourville, KY	250.68
Wayside, Charlton, MA	250.00
Barbour's Chapel, NC	247.74
Villisca, IA	247.70
Castle Hill, ME	236.71
Little Brick, Lexington, VA	225.34
Sparta, OH	225.00
Clayton, NC	220.00
Windham, ME	216.77
New Hope, SC	215.00
Dunn, NC	200.00
Dover, Foxcroft, ME	200.00
Lafayette, RI	200.00
Unity, Four Oaks, NC	200.00

Less than $200.00

Elbert, WV	188.12
Wildwood, Lenoir, NC	187.70
Memphis, TN	186.73
Spencer, WV	183.66
Harrington, ME	177.36
Newport, VT	167.88
Trinity, Jacksonville, FL	167.30
Rocky Brook, Rl	165.00
Camp Bethel, Haddam, CT	165.00
Boomer, NC	162.00
Vidalia, GA	156.84
Biddeford, ME	155.01
Victory Chapel, Mustoe, VA	154.00
Grace, Gastonia, NC	153.90
Port Clyde, ME	150.00
White Oak, WV	150.00
Hay's Fork, WV	143.68
Oak Grove, VA	142.56
Holton's Chapel, GA	134.42
Otto, WV	130.00
Hamilton Chapel, VA	128.52
First, Four Oaks, NC	123.59
Roanoke, VA	110.00
Faith, Hampton, NH	100.19
East N.C. Men's Fellowship	100.00
First, Charlotte, NC	100.00
Squire, WV	100.00
Union View, VA	100.00
Mt. Zion, OH	100.00
Los Angeles, CA	100.00
Four Corners, Seabrook, NH	100.00
Raybon, Nahunta, GA	95.00
Ferndale, WA	87.54
Lulu, FL	84.79
Shamrock, TX WHFMS	75.23
Dorcas Friendship Circle Spencer, NC	70.00
Newport, NH	61.69
St. Petersburg, FL	54.00
Middle Creek, VA	50.00
Liberty, Farmville, NC	50.00
Iron Hill, GA	50.00
Lakeland, FL	42.00
Pax, WV	40.00
Agape, Schenectady, NH	40.00
Beebe, Quebec	30.50
Sandtown, Ontario, Canada	25.67

Individual Giving

Bertha Blanchard	60.00
M/M Alden S. Bull	5.00
L. Eric Ekholm	100.00
Amber Eaton	5.00
A. Beulah Purkiser	25.00
Harry B. Berlin	25.00
Dorothy Chase	25.00

But What is He Among so Many?

Ed Whitford

There we were in Mexico! We had responded to the gospel. We had read the books about faith. We were excited and anxious to try out faith—all the old timers had told us to go.

Now we felt forgotten. There was little support and it was lonely. The culture was strange to us and to our children. We didn't know Spanish except for a few phrases we had recently learned.

It was one of those down days and while listening to the radio, a program came on with a man screaming an unbelievable gospel and making absurd claims that were completely untrue. Yes, this man was gaining followers and money that were building him an empire. How far removed that from the Kingdom of God.

Establishing a new mission

Here in Mexico, with all kinds of cults and strange teachings, we believed we could make a difference. That day we felt like Andrew when he said to the Lord, about the five loaves and two small fish with which he fed the 5,000, "What are these among so many?" What could we do? What difference would we make in a world where so many did not want to know the truth and the rest did not care. At least that is how it looked from our point of view. Lord, what are we among so many?

We did not give up. The next day the sun came up and the "drearies" of the night before slipped away. There were new things to face, problems to work out and opportunities to seize. We had to prepare paper and legal work for our new organization in a county with different laws. We looked for a place to build our home. The details of life, the necessities of family, the frustrations of a new culture, and the demands of others kept us from thinking much about the impossibility of it all. But every now and then we would think again — What are we among so many?

The work was accomplished and we went on to serve the Lord as independent missionaries. The work that had brought us to Mexico now taken over by others left us free to reach out in evangelism but, "Lord, what are we among so many?" God would answer that question one day.

"Pastor Pete"

We busied ourselves with planning and goal setting. We wanted to reach out in an area of need which others had neglected. In our travels, we came upon a small village called Testerazo. In that depressed, barren, dusty, and parched little town, with adobe and straw shacks that blended with the landscape, we met a man. As we got to know him, he requested that we come to his home and visit with him and share the gospel.

During the first visit he committed his life to Christ. From that time on we visited each week staying one or two days, sharing the gospel. It was not long before he told his friends about his new found Savior. Meetings had started and there was need for a pastor. So our friend made the natural move—he became Pastor Pete. Soon his whole family knew the Lord and then, a new baby.

It was my privilege to hold a service for this couple who wanted to dedicate their new baby to the Lord. His name was Ezekiel. There we stood under a little thatched shelter (Pastor "Pete", his wife Rebecca, and myself holding baby Ezekiel) in front of our little ragged congregation in the heat of the day forgotten by the rest of the world.

We read the Scripture; we prayed, we gave Ezekiel back to the Lord. We prayed, "My son, give me your heart...and trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not rely on your own insight.In all your ways acknowledge him,and he will make straight your paths" (Proverbs 23.26 & 3.5..6.). The date: May 2, 1965.

Life went on! There were hard times; special times, times of rejoicing and times when we wept. Our deepest desire was to meet the need of those without the gospel.

One day a man gave us a piece of property. Another came along who volunteered to build a place where we could hold classes to train men and women to serve the Lord. From that place came not only a Bible Training School, but a correspondence school, and a TEE (Theological Education Extension) center where we continued to train workers.

From that humble beginning thousands have studied the Bible by correspondence; dozens have taken courses in the TEE program; and over 70 have graduated from the Bible Training School. They have gone throughout Mexico with the Gospel, taking it to every corner

Continued on page 22

The life and ministry of Graciano Villadolid

Church Leader Serves Christ in the Philippines

Ralph Dodge

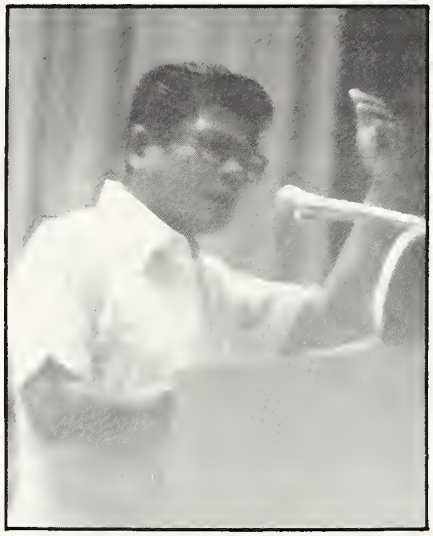
Philippine Conference President Rev. Graciano D. Villadolid came to Charleston, West Virginia to attend the 1987 General Conference. It was the first time that the Philippine Advent Christian Church was represented in the person of its president. It was also Rev. Villadolid's first visit to the North American continent.

When he visited the Advent Christian Village in Dowling Park shortly after his arrival on June 1st, it was my privilege to interview him on television. Later I listened as he shared with a smaller, more intimate group around the dinner table. Then during an interlude at General Conference he shared more about his family and hopes for the church in the Philippines.

Graciano's early life

Graciano Villadolid was born into a divided religious family on June 9th, 1934. His mother was a nominal Roman Catholic like a majority of the Philippine people. His father, however, was a member of the United Church of Christ.

The boy Graciano grew up in a middle class family with many early educational opportunities. However, he learned to work as soon as he was physically able to



do so. Following his high school graduation he secured a position with a plywood company and soon rose to be a foreman and then a supervisor of operations.

Graciano married in 1955. The Villadolids have seven children, four of the five older children are either in church work or are being currently trained at the Oro Bible College. The sixth child is now in grade school whereas the baby, an adopted child, has just had his fourth birthday. Both the older daughters are married and have two children each. The second daughter works for the Philippine government.

Commitment to follow Jesus Christ

Through the influence of his father, Graciano was encouraged to read the Bible even though he did not understand it very well. After he married he and his wife began attending Bible study classes organized by Rev. Frank Supangan, an Advent Christian pastor who also ran a small local bookstore. Under the spiritual guidance of Rev. Supanagan, Mr. & Mrs. Villadolid were baptized in December 1964.

As the Villadolids continued to study the Bible and attend worship services, Graciano felt the burden for lost people and the call to do something about it. He resigned his position in the plywood company and attended the Ebenezer Bible College in Zamboanga City. After graduation he took a pastorate at the Claveria Advent Christian Church. He served this church for nine years and then went to the Butuan City Advent Christian Church.

While serving this pastorate he also studied at the Light and Life Graduate School of Theology from which he graduated with a Master's of Ministries Degree last year.

In 1973 he was elected President of the Philippine Advent Christian Conference. With the exception of a two-year period he has continued to hold the responsible position of Conference President. Since 1981 he has also served as pastor of the Maranatha Bible Church in Butuan City.

A great future ahead for Philippine Advent Christians

Rev. Villadolid remains enthusiastic about the future of the Philippine church. The young people are entering the Oro Bible College in unprecedented numbers. What had previously been a student body of fifteen or twenty has now risen to fifty-five. The evangelistic zeal of the youth as they go to witness is contagious. A new outreach program involving some forty-five young people has a goal of reaching 15,000 people for Christ.

The conference itself has a goal of reaching 9,000 new families within the next decade. With an average of five to each family that makes a total goal of 45,000. This seems ambitious for a conference which has only thirteen active churches, nine chapels, plus five home churches in formation, but under the leadership of the Holy Spirit and with the young people on fire for Christ anything is possible.

As an example of what is happening, Rev. Villadolid cited Iligan City where a group of 104 people were recently baptized and organized into an active church. This group was not only made up of young people but included a number of professional people: doctors, lawyers, and business executives and their families.

Although the church has well trained mature Philippine leaders, there is still need for more missionaries to help train additional national workers. Additional funds are also needed as the work expands.

Impressions of America

Shortly after General Conference Rev. Villadolid returned to the Philippines via northern Illinois and Seattle.

In response to my inquiry he mentioned four major impressions of his brief visit to the United States.

(1) The American people are very friendly with the church members deeply concerned about the work in the Philippines.

(2) The General Conference was conducted very orderly with everyone respecting the rights of others. The same was true regarding public meetings and also traffic on the roads.

(3) Everything around the country seemed to be neat and clean with much attention given to appearance.

(4) The food was delicious and adequate. In fact, there always seemed to be a superabundance of food.

The visit of Rev. Villadolid will be long remembered by the delegates attending General Conference and the congregations privileged to hear him speak. All appreciate his enthusiasm for the positive future of the Advent Christian Church in the Philippines. □

Freelance writer Ralph Dodge is a retired United Methodist Bishop who lives at the Advent Christian Village in Dowling Park, Florida.

Philippine conference President Graciano Villadolid speaks to the delegates at 1987 General Conference meetings in Charleston, W. Va.

Caroline Michael
Director

"Faces of Japan"

Bonnie A. Helms

I first met Floyd and Musa Powers, Advent Christian career missionaries to Japan, when they came into my world at Mechanic Falls, Maine campground in 1983. Getting acquainted gave me opportunity to share information with them since they intended to spend their furlough year in my home city, Portland, Maine. During that year, I visited frequently with Musa. We discussed Japan and the special needs of that mission field. For me, at that point, Japan was still a far-off abstraction.

In June 1987, I was privileged to enter their world: Osaka, Japan. I lived in Floyd and Musa's home for almost four weeks and followed them through their weekly schedule. I traveled on my own to experience the special nature of Japan's religious beliefs and secular culture.

Japanese family dressed for New Year's Day.

A "jungle" of glass and concrete

Experiencing Japan firsthand was very different from reading about the country in books. Before I left Maine, someone who knew that I was going to visit missionary friends asked me, "How do you think you will like living in the jungle?" What interesting stereotypes people have about how missionaries live and what they do!

Stepping off the plan at Osaka International Airport, I saw a jungle of glass and concrete. When the missionaries arrived in 1950, Osaka was a bombed-out shell. A center of industry and culture, the city today is a tribute to Japan's post-war economic miracle. As Floyd drove home from the airport, I discovered that the traffic jams would equal any in New York or Los Angeles.

Life in the Powers' home was similiar to life in any parsonage. Many tasks had to be done, and a family routine maintained. On many days Floyd and Musa traveled in opposite directions to fulfill a variety of responsibilities.

Because Floyd pastors no specific church, he is on call for several. He counsels pastors, spends time making calls, and fills in for a different pastor almost every week. Once a month he travels north to the Tottori area to visit churches which are close to the Powers' hearts as they'd ministered there for a number of years.

Musa teaches English classes for students ranging in age from kindergarten to adult. Every Wednesday she goes by train to Ozumi for these classes. In the parsonage the phone rang constantly. Many problems were discussed and people encouraged during their conversations. Rebecca, too, had a schedule to maintain: a part-time job in a hamburger restaurant, voice lessons, and meeting with friends at a shopping center.

The wonderfully efficient train system helped everyone get everywhere on time. Musa had the train schedule posted on the side of the refrigerator. Punctuality was critical! If the train left at 10:01, the passenger who arrived on the sta-

tion platform at 10:02 would be left stranded.

Dedicated to serving Jesus Christ

If I were to use one word to describe Floyd and Musa Powers, that word would be "dedicated." Each day began with Scripture and prayer to gain the Lord's strength for the day ahead. They committed to God themselves and the people to whom they ministered. Prayer was offered for those working in other mission fields and for friends back home.

When I visited various churches with Musa, the love that the Japanese Christians have for the Powers was clearly evident. One evening the church in Kurayoshi City treated us to a wonderful pot-luck supper and time of fellowship. Floyd and Musa had known and loved these people for years. Sharing of joys and sorrows had forged a very special bond of fellowship.

In John's Gospel, some Greeks came to the disciples saying, "Sir, we would see Jesus," (John 12:21). One Japanese lady, in speaking of Sylvia Whitman's influence, told me, "I knew about Jesus because I saw Him in Miss Whitman." Floyd and Musa Powers' lives speak as powerfully as any words they can speak. Mrs. Nakai, a lady who worked in the missionaries' home during the early days when Floyd and Musa lived with Frank and Frances Toothe, responded to the call to full-time Christian service. Today, at age 70, Mrs. Nakai is still a full-time pastor.

Two special people

I will remember two special faces from all those that I met in Japan. Motoichi Masada, a young pastor who helps Musa at the kindergarten, shared his concerns for Japan's young people, "Our youth adore rock stars because their own lives are empty. It is my heart's desire to fill this emptiness with Christ. Motoichi's father and uncle are both pastors, trained by Advent Christian missionaries.

Megume Oshakata is a university research chemist. Her family came to Christ under the ministry of the Toothes. Megume described her work in herbal medicine, "God created the world as a balance. Sin destroyed that balance. Our medical research seeks to restore the balance of nature to the way that God intended it to be."

Because our missionaries have been faithfully presenting Christ in Japan since the 1950s, a healthy native church exists in Japan today. Only one percent of Japan's population is Christian; however, this one percent is good leaven to bring life to the entire loaf.

The Japanese need Christ

What are the needs today on the Japanese mission field? Japan does not need literacy programs. Everywhere I went, I saw people reading. The Japanese value education highly. They are interested in Bible classes because through these classes they can learn English, the language of international business and communications.

Japan does not need another religion. Buddhist temples and Shinto shrines are well-attended on New Year's and special holidays. Japan's real religion is materialism. The nation is prosperous; the people possess every gadget that has been invented. However, they pray to ancestors or idols which neither hear nor answer.

The Japanese need Christ. Jesus said that He is the only way to the Father (John 14:6). Japanese people can be won best by those who understand their culture. The Powers know that the message must be Christ, not western ideas. Japanese can best be won by other Japanese who have been trained. The Japanese churches need teachers of Bible and English. The Powers have requests now from four churches for teachers; however, there are no teachers to send.

The Powers and the Warriners are near retirement age. They are concerned for both short-term and career missionaries to continue the work begun by the Toothes almost forty years ago. Unlike India, where the doors are closing, Japan is open. Japanese churches do not need things; they need people.

New missionaries must be trained to meet the special needs that the Japanese have to break through the mental barriers which give intellectual assent to Christian ideas. A Japanese person may frequently be willing to add an allegiance to Christ to the gods that he already worships.

New teachers needed on the mission field in Japan will not consider large numbers. They will lead Japanese men and women to Christ one by one. Then, for the Japanese as for people anywhere, Christianity will not be a mental awareness, but a real heart experience with the Christ who lives within each believer. □

Bonnie is a secondary school English teacher, a member of the Advent Christian Church of Portland, Maine, and a Bible study teacher. She is a writer of both Christian and secular education curriculum.

SHELLY WARREN, National KJ Superintendent
7752 SE Harrison, Milwaukie, Oregon 97222

Christian Growth

A church involved in children's ministry has a reason for carrying out that ministry. If your church is involved in some type of children's ministry, please take a few minutes to list what these reasons are.

If your church is not involved in any children's ministry at this time, please take a few minutes to list the reasons one is needed. Even a church with no children has children in its community that need Jesus!

Finished? I hope that you did not censor your list. If your church decided to start a children's church because the children disrupted the Sunday morning worship service, that should be on your list. This reason is a great motivator; but, if made exclusive, all that will be accomplished is a peaceful adult worship service.

If one of your reasons for starting a children's ministry was a deep concern that these children would come to know Jesus as their Savior, then this can happen. Many times we can make the reasons we have for starting something our goal. In some cases this may work out well and produce the results that we want, but in other cases people will become frustrated knowing that what they want to happen is not. We need to know what the goals are for the ministry. Take time now to list the goals of your actual or potential children's ministry. Compare your reason list with your goal list.

Now that you have had time to get your own ideas in writing let me share with you some of my thoughts on the purposes of children's ministry. The following goal is found in a brochure written to help people better understand the purpose for King's Jewels:

To teach God's Word, particularly the portions which pertain to salvation, Christian growth and missionary outreach; to bring children into a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, and to develop Christian character.

The leadership packets for children's ministries for winter-spring 1988 include an article written by Cindy Batson on how to lead children to Christ. If this is not a goal of your children's ministry, please put it on your list—at the top! Plan a special time in some of

your meetings to talk about accepting Jesus and answering questions. As I shared with you in an earlier article, I thought that I had volunteered for open heart surgery when I raised my hand to accept Jesus into my heart.

Christian growth is something all of us struggle with in our own lives. Let us become role models for the children to whom we minister; they really look up to us. Helping children develop Christian character may feel like a weight placed upon us if we live our Christianity as a convenience rather than a commitment. When do you spend time with God, studying His Word, talking with Him as well as listening to Him? Are you waiting until a convenient time comes along or are you taking time because of the commitment you have made?

If you help lead the children's ministry in your church, plan to meet with the other helpers and discuss what your goals are for this ministry. Some goals may come as a result of a discussion on your reasons for starting the ministry. If you can clearly state the goals you hope to reach then reaching them becomes not only a possibility but a probability.

The responsibility of teaching our children about Christ and about growing up "in Christ" is an awesome task. It is one that cannot be taken lightly. My prayer is that God will do a mighty work in us and through us as we bring the message of salvation to our children and as we serve as role models for the development of Christian character. May God bless you and the children He has entrusted to your care. □

Harriet Hastings, Frank and Susie Davis in Baraboo

On Sunday night, September 27, 1987 the New Life Community Advent Christian Church WHFMS and the church mission board co-sponsored a supper and mission emphasis. A drama was performed about the lives of Frank and Susie Davis, laborers for Christ. Both pastored churches in the early to mid 1900's in the eastern United States, Canada, and in St. Louis, Missouri. A unique aspect of the dramatization was that Jim and Jan Crouse played the parts of Frank and Susie Davis, respectively. Jim is the great-grandson of Susie Davis and he is the pastor of the Baraboo, Wisconsin Church. Pamela Keepers Mjelde and Thelma Wollum took the parts of narrator and Harriet Hastings in the play which was written by Marilyn Parolini of Aurora, Illinois for the 1987 WHFMS Program Kit.

Frank and Susie knew hardships in their lives such as the death of Susie's first husband leaving her with a small daughter. Also that daughter, Hazel, lost her young husband. Another hardship was being apart much of their married life because of responsibilities of pastoring different churches. But Christ was their hope and sustenance.

May we who are striving to work for Christ's cause in the 1980's remember those who have worked before us. May we thank God for such loyal workers and ask Him for wisdom to know how to touch the lives of those around us who don't know Christ as Savior and Lord.

Jan Crouse
Baraboo, Wisconsin

Susie Davis was the grandmother of Earl Crouse of Sumas, Washington. Earl and Mim Crouse's son Jim pastors in Baraboo, Wisconsin.

Models for the humorous fashion show *presented by WHFMS ladies at Dover, Florida include: front row (l to r) Melissa Jones, Frances Craven, Mary Barber, Betty Williamson; back row (l to r) Cheryl Barber, Pauline Connors, Dorothy Lehtola, Linda DeFreitas, and Susie Harrell. The event was a combined Mother/Daughter and Father/Son banquet with about eighty in attendance.*

Mission Prayer Partnership

FEBRUARY

19 **Praise** the Lord for **another new church** started in **Nigeria.**

20 **Praise** the Lord for the recent **baptisms** in the Mandaui Fellowship.

21 **Praise** the Lord for the gift of a **new building** for our work in El Florido, Mexico.

22 **Pray** for **Bob Mayer, Director of Publications** and his staff, as they share in the important ministry of publishing our materials.

23 **Pray** for **Advent Christians in China.** May God bless and prosper them.

24 **Pray** for **Alice Brown** and the heavy responsibility that she carries as Director of OBC.

25 **Pray** for **Oro Bible College** and the needs of its students.

26 **Praise the Lord** for the successful meetings that **Rev. Devasahayam** had in Penang, Malaysia.

27 **Pray** for **Reverend and Mrs. Thambusamy Devairakkam,** as they minister in Klaung, Malaysia.

28 **Pray** for **Musa Powers** that she may receive a special blessing on this her birthday.

29 **Pray** for **Floyd Powers** and the responsibilities that he carries as Superintendent of our Japanese mission work.

MARCH

1 **Pray** for **Margaret Helms** as she continues with leadership training in Advent Christian churches in the Cebu area.

Prayer Partnership

2 Pray for **Frank and Judy Jewett** and their family as they prepare to come home next month.

3 Pray for **Dave Vignali** as he assists the Mandaui Fellowship and Banilad Fellowship in their work.

4 Pray for **Francis and Lynne Ssebikindu** in the important work that they are doing in Memphis, Tenn.

5 Pray for the growth of the Hispanic missionary outreaches in the United States.

6 Pray for another successful and record-breaking **Penny Crusade** in 1988.

7 Pray for **Marion Damon** as she trains young men for pastoral ministry in India.

8 Pray for the **NAE, EFMA Convention** in Orlando, Florida.

9 Pray for **Barbara White** as she assists Marion in the training of national pastors in the work in Kodaikanal.

10 Pray for **Beryl Joy Hollis** that she may continue to gain strength from her bout with hepatitis.

11 Pray for **E.K. Akpan** and **E.P. Etuk-Akpan** as they lead the Nigerian Advent Christian Conference.

12 Pray for **Arturo and Rosa Angulo** and **Ever Perez** as they minister in Ensenada.

13 Pray for **Abel Garcia** as he supervises our work in Mexico.

14 Pray for **Alberto and Fabiola Gomez** as they work in the El Florido area in Tijuana.

15 Pray for **Caroline Michael** and her busy schedule of Director of Women's Ministries.

16 Pray for **Mrs. Beatrice Moore,** national president of the WHFM Society.

17 Pray for strength for our retired missionaries today.

18 Pray that the Lord of the Harvest would continue to enlist laborers for His Harvest.

Mission Director Makes 1st Trip **From pg. 7**

sionaries prepare a roast-pig feast to honor me as a mission director. They did this because I represented the Advent Christians in the United States and Canada who brought them the gospel.

I was privileged to be at the annual meeting of the Japanese Conference and the semi-annual meeting of the Philippine Conference and be able to catch the flavor and the concern of these conferences. It was a joy to pray with the missionaries on the fields, to share their burdens.

How do Christians in Japan and the Philippines feel about our sending missionaries to them?

A Japanese pastor, with tears in his eyes, said to me, "Tell the American and Canadian people *thank you* for sending missionaries. If it were not for David and Alice Osborne I would never have come to know Jesus Christ."

A Filipino woman, a graduate of Oro Bible College said to me, "Tell your people we love them."

Another woman said to me, "I accepted Jesus Christ as my Savior when (past mission director) Joe Baucom was here, and I cried when I learned of his death."

I visited in the home of a lady who now owns the old mission home in Japan. She took me to her room and said, "This is where I heard Bertha Cassidy pray and it changed my life." □

But What is He Among so Many? **From page 15**

and every level of society. Churches have been planted and evangelists are walking the dusty roads to out-of-the-way villages today. Out of those trained, some have gone on to start other schools.

New opportunities

In the past few years, the Lord has brought my wife and I back to our home state of Rhode Island where we have become members and pastor of an Advent Christian Church just a year ago. We feel comfortable theologically and have read of our Advent pioneers and examined our mission outreach. We have asked what are we doing in response to the Great Commission. It has not been revoked. And though the answer is not direct it goes something like this, "But what are we among so many?"

There are now 80 million people in Mexico and it is growing. We have an opportunity to proclaim the gospel and plant churches there—the door is open. Who will go for us? And then in the mail came an invitation to graduation from the Bible Training School, and listed as one of the graduates I read, Ezekiel Serrato Sotello, the little one we dedicated so long ago—now ready to serve. Yes, there is a lad here—but what is he among so many? He could be much if we would take him and pray for him and let God use him to feed the multitudes. □

A long-time Mexican missionary, Ed Whitford is pastor of the N. Scituate, Rhode Island Advent Christian Church.

Job Description for the Pastor

"It was He who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ" (Ephesians 4:11-13).

Whenever I read the above passage of Scripture, I immediately recognize that it is speaking to *me*, since I have accepted the call of God to be a pastor in the church of Jesus Christ. But I don't think that this passage is exclusively for pastors and teachers, because of the way it speaks about the people of God.

You will notice that Paul says that the *reason* God provided for pastors and teachers is to *prepare* God's people for works of service. Sometimes when I have been attempting to help people find a ministry *within* the church body, or to discover what gifts they may have been given by the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:4-11), I get the impression that people feel that I am trying to "get out of work."

However, if you read this passage, you will see that one of God's mandates for me, one of His purposes for providing God's people with pastors, is so that *they* (the people) can be equipped and prepared to do works of service. It is *God's idea* that His people, all of them, work for the good of the church, to promote the things of Jesus Christ in our world.

Notice the *reason* behind this preparation: "that the *body* may be built up until *we all* reach unity in the faith...and become *mature*." God doesn't want His people to be baby Christians, infant Christians, or even young teenage Christians. God wants His people to be mature believers, full of the knowledge of the Son of God, and united in their faith.

That's quite a lot to ask, yet God has decreed that this is indeed part of the job of a pastor. So the next time I ask you, or your pastor asks you to consider doing something in the church; or to go to a seminar, special program, or event, don't think they're trying to get out of work, but rather consider the fact that the pastor is attempting to do the job God has decreed must be done. That job is building up and equipping the church so that Christ might be glorified and the people prepared.

Oh yes, it's neat to be a pastor. I like it a lot, especially the chances to visit with and share with many of you in your homes. Please remember me in your prayers, as I remember you in my prayers. □

—*Pastor Rick Searles*

Pastor Rick Searles serves the Torrington, Connecticut Advent Christian Church. This article originally appeared in the October 1987 Torch, *the newsletter of the church.*

Only 24 Hours to Live? **From pg. 5**

were other people, also, who prayed for me, not just in my hometown, but across the United States and Canada. I'm so thankful for all those prayers.

At age 17 I thought nothing could happen to me. I felt I had it all. I was a senior in high school. I would graduate in June. I felt I had the rest of my life to live.

But when I realized all the things that I had been through in just a week — I looked at my life differently. After realizing what I had been through, I asked, "Why me? Why did I experience this ordeal?" Then I thought that there is always a reason for everything that happens. Maybe I had to experience this to reach other people. Maybe through me someone would come to know how great God really is.

I never realized that He is always there when I need Him, that He really does answer prayer, and that miracles do happen. I remember thinking, "I could have died, but God healed me. He let me live. Why? Why did He let me live?"

I don't know the answer, but I believe there was a purpose for me to live. I don't know what that purpose is — maybe just to be able to tell other people about God's healing power.

I hope someday to have all my questions answered, but until then I will tell others what God did for me and what He can do for you. I want to live my life the way He wants me to live. □

Now 21 years old, Loudell is married. She grew up in the Beals, Maine Advent Christian Church and is the daughter of Harleigh and Irena Alley. Gary Havener, pastor at the Beal's Advent Christian Church recommended Loudell's story to the Advent Christian Witness.

Your Servants for Christ's Cause

International Missionaries

Philippines

Alice Brown (March 24)
Box 223
Cagayan de Oro City 8401
PHILIPPINES

Margaret Helms (September 18)
P.O. Box 263
Cebu City 6401
PHILIPPINES

Frank and Judy Jewett
(December 11 and January 29)
Danny Jewett (June 13, 1976)
Timmy Jewett (June 26, 1978)
Letitia Jewett (April 13, 1980)
P.O. Box 263
Cebu City 6401
PHILIPPINES

David Vignali (May 10)
P.O. Box 263
Cebu City 6401
PHILIPPINES

Japan

Floyd and Musa Powers
(October 8 and February 28)
Rebecca Powers (Nov. 11, 1971)
18 - 11- 4 Motoyama Kita cho
Higashinada ku, Kobe shi 658
JAPAN

Austin and Dorothy Warriner
(January 1 and January 18)
5-3-37 Okayama Higashi
Shijonawate Shi
Osaka 575
JAPAN

India

Marion Damon (March 27)
Box 17, Andivilla
Kodaikanal 624101
INDIA

Beryl Joy Hollis (December 16)
American Advent Mission
Velacheri, Madras 600 042
INDIA

Barbara White (January 14)
Box 17, Andivilla
Kodaikanal 624101
INDIA

On Leave

Bessie Smith (March 27)
Box 657, Waukewan Street
Meredith, NH 03253

National Missionaries

Malaysia

amy and
Devairakkam
Sayang Housing Trust
ang, Johor
IA

Beulah Devasahayam
Cempaka
embira
ting, Selangor
IA

Memphis

Francis and Lyne Ssebikindu
(May 13 and May 8)
Faith Nancy (September 28, 1982)
Ashley Grace (November 21, 1985)
2590 Faxon Avenue
Memphis, TN 38112

Mexico

Abel Garcia-Lara
368 Anita Street, Sp. 62
Chula Vista, CA 92011

Alberto Gomez Ramos
Arturo Angulo Rosas
Ever Perez Morales
c/o Abel Garcia-Lara

Nigeria

E. A. Akpan—Superintendent
Nigerian Advent Christian Mission
P.O. Box 1642
Uyo; Akwa Ibom State
NIGERIA

Advent Christian General Conference
P.O. Box 23152
Charlotte, NC 28212

tterson; World Missions
wold; Christian Education
Michael; Women's Ministries

Robert W. Cole; Finance
Robert Mayer; Publications
David Northup; Executive Vice-president

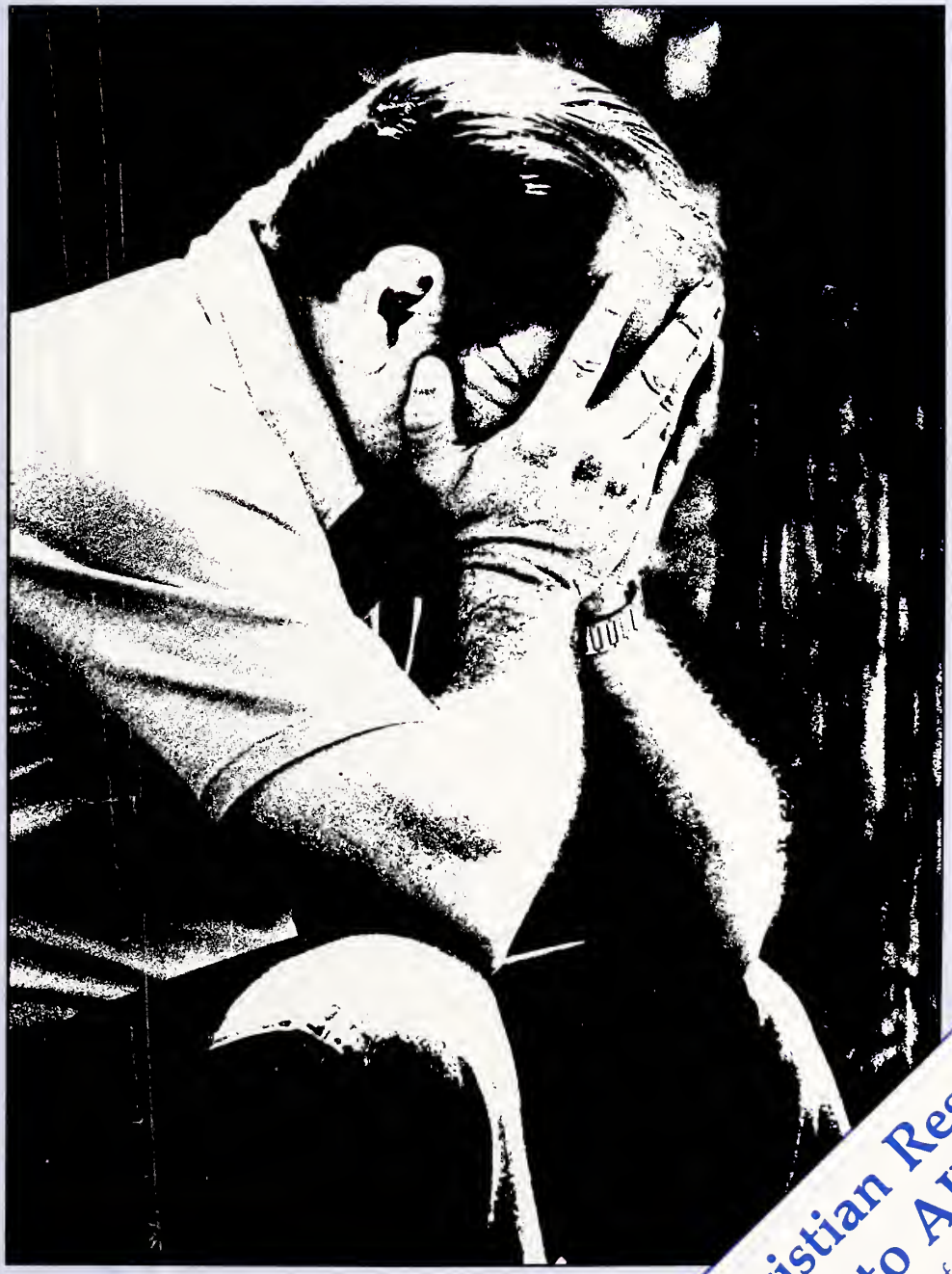
AC04343
University of North Carolina
Serials Dept Davis Library
080 A
Chapel Hill, NC 27514

C286.7 / A24

Advent Christian WITNESS

MAR 4 1988

March 1988



Christian Responses to AIDS

pages four and eight

FEATURES

AIDS: A Killer Disease 4

Ralph Dodge discusses basic information all of us need to know about Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome.

Aiding the Victim of AIDS 8

Pastor William Harrington describes his experience in ministry to a victim of AIDS and explores how people and local churches can share God's love and good news in caring and compassionate ways.

Journey to Japan: An Interview with Steven and Ann Lay 10

Pastor David McCarthy interviewed the Lay family after their recent return from a short term assignment with Advent Christian missions in Japan. Steven and Ann share some of their impressions and experiences about mission work in Japan.

Are You Proud of the Gospel? 12

David McCarthy explores how the Gospel's meaning and message can make us proud to be followers of Jesus Christ.

DEPARTMENTS

From the Editor 3

Review 16

Women's Ministries 18

Prayer Partnership 21

The Family Builder 23

On the cover

AIDS has been labeled "The Disease of the '80s" by much of the media. But much television and newspaper reporting misses the human tragedy of this killer disease. "How Christians can respond to AIDS and its victims," is the issue explored in our issue this month.

Volume 36 Number 3

Advent Christian WITNESS

Editor Robert Mayer

Contributing Editors Caroline Michael, Harold Patterson, William Batson, Clayton Blackstone, David McCarthy

Art Director Linda Perault

Typesetting Susan Gettis

The Advent Christian Witness (ISSN #007-740) is published monthly except for a combined July-August issue by the Advent Christian General Conference of America, 14601 Albemarle Road, P.O. Box 23152, Charlotte, N.C. 28212. Subscription rates in the United States and Canada: One year, $11.00. Single copy: $1.00. Overseas rate: One year, $14.00. Second class postage paid at Charlotte, N.C. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Advent Christian Witness, P.O. Box 23152, Charlotte, N.C. 28212.

As the official publication of the Advent Christian General Conference, the Advent Christian Witness publishes the teachings of the Advent Christian Church and promotes the task of evangelism both in North America and around the world. The views expressed in this magazine are those of the author and may not necessarily reflect those of the editor or the Advent Christian General Conference. Member: Evangelical Press Association.

Copyright © 1988 by the Advent Christian General Conference of America, Inc.

FROM THE EDITOR

RESPONDING TO AIDS: BLINDED BY FEAR OR SPARKED BY COMPASSION

Has any disease sparked more fear and controversy than *Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome?* Fear of the AIDS virus has led to behavior as bizarre as what we witnessed last year in Arcadia, Florida.

Arcadia was anything but paradise for three young children accidently afflicted with the AIDS virus during blood transfusions for hemophilia. Not only were they shunned; they and their parents were driven from their home by an arsonist's torch and by the hateful words and deeds of an entire town.

I wish that what happened in Arcadia was an isolated incident. Unfortunately, it's not. Irrational fear can still grab hold of our emotions and cause us to respond in spiteful, destructive ways to those who desperately need compassion and understanding. That family in Arcadia needed the touch of God's love. Yet where was the church? Were God's people paralyzed by the same fear that gripped the entire town? Or were they afraid to get involved?

The AIDS virus will cause churches to face some gripping realities within the next five years:

•Estimates now indicate that between one and two million people carry the AIDS virus in the United States alone. During the next three years, many medical experts expect at least 230,000 new AIDS cases and some estimate that by 1993, over one million Americans could be dead or dying from the virus.

•Cost to care for AIDS patients in the United States are expected to run over 38 *billion* dollars. Within ten years, AIDS related research and medical costs could top 1.5 *trillion* dollars.

•While some think that a cure may be found by the year 2000, many others point out that the AIDS virus has already mutated into more than 40 different forms. That means we already need that many different vaccines. There is no cure in sight during the next several years.

•AIDS victims not only suffer the traumatic effects of the disease. They face ostracism and isolation from family and friends. Physical and emotional disintegration often go hand in hand.

In essence, AIDS today is much like leprosy was during Jesus' time. Our attitude towards its victims should model the compassion and care Jesus showed for lepers. AIDS victims need to hear that Jesus loves them and that he showed his love for them by his death on the cross. AIDS victims need Christian compassion from God's people, not abandonment because of irrational fear.

Some argue that AIDS is a sign for God's judgment for particular sin and that AIDS victims get what they deserve. But I contend that all of us are sinners who stand in need of God's grace. Scripturally, God sees my sin no differently than anyone else's. Christ died so that my sin might be forgiven and so that I might be restored to a right relationship with God. That's true for all of us no matter what our past.

Will our response to AIDS victims be based on the irrational fear that drove so many in Arcadia to destructive behavior? Or will we follow our Lord's example by proclaiming the Gospel to AIDS victims and demonstrating care and compassion? □

AIDS:

A Killer Disease

Ralph E. Dodge

"AIDS is a life-threatening disease and a major public health issue," so stated Dr. C. Everett Koop in his *Surgeon General's Report*. First discovered and labelled in 1981, the Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome has rapidly spread. By 1991 the Surgeon General estimates 179,000 deaths in the United States alone. Although there is much investigation going on, no sure cure has yet been discovered.

The most unique of all

The name, Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome, suggests that the resistance system of the body is damaged and can no longer protect against disease. In their book, *The Medical Mystery*, Drs. Marta and Frederick Siegel write, "Unlike previously epidemic diseases, which have usually slipped through the intricate network of the immune system, AIDS destroys the fiber of the system itself. It has quickly emerged as the newest and possibly most unique of all plagues."

A *Life Skills Education Pamphlet* explains that, "The AIDS virus, HTLV-3, enters the body and attacks the white cells, further, the virus suppresses the bone marrow's ability to produce more of the crucial white cells. The victim is then vulnerable to

any invading organisms in the environment, and the result is multiple and serious illnesses such as pneumonias, meningitis, and tumors. These secondary diseases are the reason for the high mortality rate among AIDS patients; the body is simply incapable of fighting them and grows progressively weaker."

Dr. Siegel further states, "Its rampage continues at a relentless pace as the number of cases doubles every six months, with no letup in sight. The overall mortality rate has been around 45%, and no patient with opportunistic infections has survived beyond three years."

The Surgeon General Koop states, "We expect between 50 and 100 million deaths worldwide by the early years of the next century. Ninety-one countries have already reported AIDS." He estimates that the disease "is going to increase ninefold in the U.S. between now and 1990."

How are people infected?

There are three known ways in which an individual may be infected. The most common is through sexual intercourse.

At first AIDS was thought to be an ailment only among homosexuals, among whom it is the most prevalent. Now it is readily acknowledged that an infected heterosexual partner in intercourse may also transmit the disease. Prostitutes and those who patronize them are the most likely carriers. By far the most common way of spreading the disease is through sexual intercourse with an infected partner.

The Surgeon General succinctly summarizes the transmission process, "A person acquires the virus during sexual contact with an infected person's blood or semen and possibly vaginal secretions. The AIDS virus can be passed from penis to rectum and vagina and vice versa without a visible tear in the tissue or the presence of blood."

From a Christian viewpoint the avoidance of the AIDS virus comes with the practice of a Christian lifestyle which includes monogamy in marriage...

The second most common way of spreading the disease is through the blood. Addicts who use the needle to inject drugs into their bodies may transmit more than they realize. Dr. Koop reports, "Users of intravenous drugs make up 25 percent of the cases of AIDS throughout the country. The AIDS virus is carried in contaminated blood left in the needle, syringe, or other drug related implements and injected into the new victim by reusing dirty syringes and needles."

It is most important for medical personnel and family practictioners to be cautious and use only clean instruments in giving injections. Irrespective of who uses it, an infected needle can carry the virus germs.

Because of the possibility of AIDS germs in the blood banks, some people have begun to bank their own blood for future injections. However, the Surgeon General estimates that AIDS-infected blood is undetected about once in 100,000 donations. Nevertheless, great care is being used to test donors before accepting their blood for storage.

The third known way to become infected is by transmission by a pregnant mother to her fetus. The Surgeon General warns, "If a woman is infected with the AIDS virus and becomes pregnant, she...can pass the AIDS virus to her unborn child. Approximately one third of the babies born to AIDS-infected mothers will also be infected with the AIDS virus. Most of the infected babies will eventually develop the disease and die. Almost all babies with AIDS have been born to women who

Continued on next page

were intravenous drug users or the sexual partners of intravenous drug users."

Efforts to find a cure

Although pharmaceutical companies are active in trying to develop a drug that will be effective against the AIDS virus, to date no secure remedy has been found. In her book, *A.I.D.S., The Killer Disease of the 80s*, Janet Baker writes, "The Center for Disease Control investigators do not know of any patient with A.I.D.S. who has gained lost immunity."

The Surgeon General is emphatic in stating, "There is presently no cure for AIDS. There is presently no vaccine to prevent AIDS."

However, experimentation to find a counteracting drug continues. Eventually some drug may be discovered. According to the *Washington Times* for 3/24/87, the Burroughs Wellcome Co. is developing a new drug, Retrovir, which is available in very limited quantities. Its effectiveness has not been widely tested.

Avoiding AIDS

Faced with a worldwide rapidly spreading disease for which no cure is known what must be done? The answer is to do our utmost to avoid the virus. The most certain way of escaping the ailment is to abstain from sexual contact with other infected people and avoid any intravenous drug injections under unsanitary conditions.

The virus is not caught by casual contact with infected people as earlier feared. Dr. Koop affirms, "There is no danger of infection with AIDS virus by casual social contact. Dogs, cats, and domestic animals are not a source of infection."

Testing for the virus may be deceptive as it may remain dormant in the blood for indefinite periods and then become active. In practical terms it is well to know with whom one is dealing in the intimate sexual relations of life. Promiscuous lifestyles and casual sexual relationships are out if one is to avoid the killer virus.

Surgeon General Koop states, "We can expect between 50 and 100 million deaths worldwide by the early years of the next century."

As is the case in all areas of life, education about the disease and its causes may be helpful in preventing its wild-fire spread. Changing cultural patterns through education is a slow process of counteracting an epidemic of this nature. However, it must be widely used for every segment of society is affected by this killer disease. It is especially important that teenagers in our schools become aware of its danger.

From a Christian viewpoint, the avoidance of the AIDS virus coincides with the practice of a Christian lifestyle which includes monogamy in marriage and the use of prescribed drugs for the treatment of illnesses. It is those following a promiscuous lifestyle who are most endangered.

From a medical viewpoint the Surgeon General comes to a similar conclusion when he summarizes his report to the nation by stating, "The most certain way to avoid getting the AIDS virus and to control the AIDS epidemic in the United States is for individuals to avoid promiscuous sexual practices, to maintain mutually faithful monogamous sexual relationships, and to avoid injecting illicit drugs." □

Ralph E. Dodge is a frequent contributor to the Advent Christian Witness. He is a retired United Methodist bishop and missionary and currently lives at the Advent Christian Village in Dowling Park, Florida.

Bring back the joy of teaching Sunday school!

Do your teachers gain a special joy and satisfaction from teaching Sunday school?

Are they assured their class time is worthwhile, their lessons Biblically sound? Do they see students responding to Scripture?

They can! And the right Sunday school curriculum will help—Bible-in-Life curriculum.

Send for free samples, and see how Bible-in-Life can put joy back into teaching. With teaching guidance that's clear and thorough. Effective classroom helps that keep students interested and involved. And of course, solid Bible teaching that draws students to Christ.

Just fill out and mail the coupon below. There's no obligation to buy.

Free Sunday School Curriculum Samples
Check any or all departments below. No obligation to buy.

☐ Nursery ☐ K'grtn.
☐ Primary ☐ Pri.-Jr.
☐ Junior ☐ Jr. High
☐ Sr. High ☐ Adult

Name _____ Position _____

Church Name _____

☐ Church
☐ Home Address _____

City/State _____ Zip _____

☐ Church
☐ Home Phone No. _____/_____

DEPARTMENT OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION
ADVENT CHRISTIAN GENERAL CONFERENCE
P.O BOX 23152 CHARLOTTE, NC 28212

Aiding the Victim of AIDS

William P. Harrington

When you speak about AIDS today, the very word strikes fear in the hearts of most people. This dreaded disease is a killer. Sometime ago while pastoring a church in one of America's large metropolitan areas, I had the opportunity of ministering to a victim of the AIDS virus. Through that experience, I became aware of the difference that local churches and pastors can make in the lives of those who suffer from this disease.

The danger of AIDS was first recognized in Los Angeles, California in 1981, when five healthy young men developed a condition known as Pneumocystis Carinil Pneumonia, known as PCP. PCP is one of several opportunistic infections connected with Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome, or AIDS. And again when you speak of AIDS, we all know there is no known cure for this disease. Contacting this virus generally results in certain death.

Doing what Christ called me to do

What then was I doing trying to minister to a victim of this disease? I felt that I was doing what Christ would want me to do and what He would have done, if He was literally walking among us today.

Not only was I able to minister to the victim, but to his family as well. For they too, needed help and encouragement during this time. Often we think about victims and neglect those connected to them. I was there, almost from the beginning at the hospital, when this young man was told he had AIDS. I was there, almost from the beginning when the family was told. I not only visited this man at the hospital, but at home after he was released and after the doctors had done all they could do. I witnessed the many days of struggle he, as well as his family, experienced. So I can say, in all honesty, I've been there.

Modern day leprosy

From the beginning God reminded me of a somewhat parallel disease from the Bible; leprosy. Leprosy in many ways is similar to AIDS; not to the disease itself, but in the way people deal with them. The victims are socially separated. The very word of these diseases triggered fear among the masses. The cure was unknown. And in most cases, the people who surrounded the victims were mostly ignorant of the disease itself. In both diseases people's knowledge was based on "old wives' tales" and inaccurate information. I often think of AIDS as a modern day leprosy.

The thought of AIDS as a modern day leprosy often runs through my mind even today. I once discussed this expression with another minister and he agreed that the human response to both are strikingly similar. When I think about this comparison, I'm reminded of the story of Jesus and the leper found in Luke 5:12-15.

The Bible says that Jesus entered a city and came in contact with a

man "full of leprosy." Jesus didn't avoid Him, or condemn him for entering the city itself. He could have because the society of His day isolated lepers as a threat to society. Instead, the Bible says, "He put forth His hand and touched him."

There is no stronger bond between two people than a touch. When I ministered to this young man with AIDS I often touched him. I did it without fear or reservation and I believe that this in itself helped us to become close. He saw a pastor willing to accept him where he was and in the condition he was in. I felt no reservation in touching him because I knew that Jesus died for him, just like he had for me. After all didn't Jesus die for the whole world, lepers and AIDS victims too?

Also, I had no problem ministering to this man because right up front we understood each other. I talked to him openly about his life. He confessed Christ openly. He confessed his sins openly. We prayed together for each other. And in his condition he was willing to minister to others who had the same condition. He aided others with AIDS. I too met some of these people. Many are perhaps dead today.

God blessed my life through our times together. The blessing really came from our touch. I was willing to touch him physically, he touched me with his sincerity. He touched my spirit.

Ministering to the AIDS victim

Perhaps in the future you will cross the path of a victim of AIDS. Allow me to give you some advice. First, realize that person is God's creation. He is a "whosoever" who can believe in Jesus Christ and be saved.

Second, be willing to "touch" that person physically, as well as spiritually. Also do not fear that a simple touch will transmit this disease to you. Remember that most people can sense your feelings toward them by the way you act. If you avoid people they will know that you really don't care. I feel that as disciples of Jesus Christ we should always care.

I can't help but close with one more passage of Scripture that has helped me work with all types of people. It's found in 1 Corinthians 6:9-10. Here we find Paul giving the Church at Corinth a list of "thou shalt nots." He tells the Corinthian believers that no one could inherit the Kingdom of God if they openly practiced these sins. But notice what he adds in verse 11, "And that is what some of you were. But you were washed,...".

In other words, in that church body were some converted fornicators; idolaters; adulterers, homosexuals, drunkards, and extortioners just to mention a few. In this list are many types of people that most of us would pass by. But Jesus' followers didn't, for Paul said they were now church members at the First Church of Jesus Christ at Corinth. For they had been washed by the blood of Jesus. □

A graduate of Berkshire Christian College, William Harrington currently pastors the Advent Christian Church in Adria, Virginia.

an interview with Steven and Ann Lay

Journey to Japan

Dr. Steven Lay, Ann, and their children, Beth Ann and Timothy recently returned from a thirteen-month term as volunteer missionaries in Japan. The Lays are members of the Advent Christian Church in Aurora, Illinois. Their pastor, David McCarthy, interviewed them for the *Advent Christian Witness.*

What surprised you most about the Japanese way of life?

STEVEN: Our biggest surprise was to encounter a culture so advanced in technology, but having a religion of primitive superstition. The Japanese excel in building automobiles, television sets, and computer chips; but they continue to worship trees and animals, fire, and rocks.

You found that the average person doesn't think through his/her religious beliefs?

STEVEN: Many people have only a vague notion what their religion teaches. They take part in rituals at temples or shrines in hope of receiving good health and good luck.

One day I went to see a famous temple in Kyoto that included a large stone turtle. Visitors would rub their hand on the image, then touch their eyes, ears — wherever they needed healed. I watched as one woman rubbed the turtle, then rested her hand on the head of a small child. Such evidence of superstition gripped my heart. The futility of it all, the emptiness!

Your visits to Buddhist temples must have given you many glimpses of this futile search for spiritual reality.

STEVEN: Up in the hills behind Kyoto I saw a man standing beneath a small waterfall on the temple grounds. As the water splashed over him, the man read aloud from a wooden tablet. I couldn't make out what he was saying except for "Dozo, dozo, dozo" — "Please, please, please!" He repeated that prayer over and over, probably as penance for a wrong or beseeching the gods for a favor.

Could you describe some of your frustrations?

ANN: For me it was the language barrier. It was hard not to be able to understand or to communicate with others. For instance, how do you take advantage of bargains in the stores when you can't read the ads? How do you know the difference between hair spray and spray deodorant when you can't read the labels? And how do you thank the little grey-haired church member who sees you grocery shopping and rushes over to give you a carton of ice cream?

How did you cope with those limitations?

ANN: We repeatedly sought Christ's help, and over and over He reassured us with Proverbs 3:5-6, "Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not to your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him and He will direct your paths." I felt that he was saying, "Ann, trust me. I brought you here for a purpose and I will see you through until that purpose is accomplished."

Did other Bible promises help you cope with difficulties?

ANN: 2 Corinthians 12:9 became my steady companion. In that passage the Lord says, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is

made perfect in weakness." Those words were a great encouragement at times when I felt in over my head.

On one occasion Steve and I were singing in front of 200 people. My voice cracked and for several measures I couldn't sing at all. I smiled, but inwardly I wanted the floor to swallow me up. I was able to complete the duet, but felt that I had failed miserably. Weeks later we learned that God used the song to bless several persons who heard it. Through such experiences I came to understand that while we may not always be satisfied with our performances, the Lord is able to use even our inadequacies to accomplish His purpose, He doesn't seek perfection from us, just full obedience.

Did you have interesting contacts on university campuses?

STEVEN: On one occasion I was invited to lecture on my mathematics research at Yamaguchi University, one of the outstanding schools in Japan. After my presentation the faculty took me to dinner. As we talked about my reason for coming to Japan, my hosts acknowledged that they were Buddhists, but seldom attended religious functions. One man admitted that he did not even go to special festivals at the temple. When I inquired how he could call himself a Buddhist when he never attended he simply replied, "I will die a Buddhist." He was saying that he would go to the temple only one time — for his funeral. Still, he considered himself a Buddhist.

Did the idolatry you saw in Japan remind you of Bible passages about the worship of images?

STEVEN: Some Old Testament incidents came to life as we watched the men and women at altars and shrines. Soon after we arrived we noticed that people would clap their hands twice and sometimes ring a bell before saying their prayers. A friend explained that they clapped so that the god would notice them and they rang the bell in case their deity was sleeping. It sounded exactly like the prophets of Baal on Mt. Carmel, and stood in marked contrast to the God revealed in Scripture as one who never "slumbers nor sleeps."

It's hard to describe how immersed in paganism and idolatry the Japanese culture appears to Christian eyes. Imagine a nation where at New Years 80% of the people attend a temple or shrine to pray before idols of wood and stone. The great distinctive of Christianity is that God is alive.

Is there a single lesson or impression that you bring back to share with Advent Christians here?

ANN: For me, it is the lesson that obedience and submission to Jesus Christ are essential for one's spiritual growth. I think that many Christians like to appear self-sufficient; they believe that in the long run they can work out anything by their own efforts. But we found that in Japan we would have floundered had we relied on our own skills to see us through. We had a settled conviction that the Lord wanted our family in Japan during those thirteen months, and we were sure that obedience to His will assured us of His unfailing care. Again and again we sensed His compassion, His guidance. He was there to uplift and encourage us. The more we admitted our dependency on Christ, the more strongly we felt His love.

STEVEN: In the city where we lived stood a large department store. Between the parking lot and main entrance, shoppers passed a small Shinto shrine maintained by the store. One day while taking pictures, I noticed a young mother. She came over to the shrine, clapped her hands twice and began to pray. Standing by her side, her five-year-old daughter mimicked the mother's actions. There they stood, heads bowed, hands pressed, reverently praying to a fox made of clay.

I'll never forget that scene. What can the little girl look forward to but a life of emptiness? That image will be of no more help to her than a pile of rubbish, yet that is the only spiritual training she knows. Oh that both child and mother might come to know the living God!

What challenge would you like to leave with Advent Christians?

STEVEN: I would like to challenge all Christians to allow the living God to direct them into His plans and purpose. God loves each of us so much that He has a plan for each believer. He may call one to be a businessperson, another to be a pastor or missionary. I don't know specifically what God is calling everyone to do, but I know that happiness in life comes from finding God's will and doing it. □

Are You Proud of the Gospel?

David S. McCarthy

For centuries, pride has been lumped with other "deadly sins," but is it always wrong to be proud? Not if you accept the dictionary's definition of pride as "holding someone or something in high esteem." In many cases it is a virtue to be proud of one's country, children, and church.

Paul would agree. He exclaims, "I am proud of the Gospel" (Romans 1:16). That's remarkable considering the personal anguish Paul endured because of His commitment to that Gospel. The Apostle was imprisoned at Philippi, driven out of Thessalonica, smuggled from Berea, laughed at in Athens. The Gospel was called "foolishness" by some and regarded as a "stumblingblock" by others. Yet despite these misfortunes, Paul expressed tremendous pride in Christ's message. Take a closer look at Romans 1:16-17. What features of the Gospel make a Christian proud?

Proud of the Gospel's person

It is "the Gospel of *Christ*" that excites the Apostle.

Have you noticed how abstract ideas take on significance when they are embodied in an individual? Love, presented as an intangible quality may bring nods of assent, but no great change in attitude. But when love is clothed in flesh and blood, it changes men and women for the better.

Years ago, famed philosopher William James was asked to define "spirituality." He replied, "I don't know that I can define it in words, but I can point to someone who embodies it — Phillips Brooks." The Boston minister had captured the essence of spirituality in a way words could never describe. And others were mightily influenced by what they saw in Brooks' life.

Likewise, Paul's values and attitudes were shaped by the person of Jesus Christ. Here's an important distinctive of Christianity. World religions may stress ethical principles and moral concepts, but the Christian faith is built upon a relationship with a living person. Christianity is Christ, and we may be proud to embrace a gospel that points to Him.

Be proud of One who came into this world and identified Himself with lost, laboring humanity. Be proud that He lived in total obedience to the Father's will, that He made the Kingdom of God His primary concern, and gave service to others the highest priority. That He made a servant's towel rather than a king's sceptre the badge of royalty.

Be proud of the death He died and the victory He won by His resurrection on Easter morning. Be proud of a Gospel that is linked forever to the person of our wonderful Lord.

Proud of the Gospel's Power

It is, to use Paul's word, "The power of God to everyone who believes."

Bible scholars suggest that the Apostle wrote this line in response to charges that he was avoiding Rome. According to his critics Paul stayed away because he doubted that the Gospel was equal to the challenge of prevailing philosophies and religious teachings.

In the face of his accusers, Paul insisted that the Gospel was literally, "The dynamite of God." Rome's power could tear down and destroy, but only the Gospel could build up and set free.

World religions may stress ethical principles and moral concepts, but the Christian faith is built upon a relationship with a living person. Christianity is Christ, and we may be proved to embrace a gospel that points to Him

From time to time we discover the accuracy of Paul's remark. In 1974 Christian leaders from many lands met at Lausanne, Switzerland to plan methods of winning men and women to Christ. They also scheduled an open-air rally featuring gifted musicians and speakers. An Indian neurosurgeon of Hindu background told how Jesus Christ had liberated him from depression and guilt and given him joy in serving others. Then a Japanese evangelist, raised a Buddhist, described the brokenness of his boyhood and how his inner emptiness was remedied when a missionary led him to the Lord. Finally, an African bishop, born into a tribal religion, told how Christ's forgiveness set him free from hatred of certain enemies. That afternoon, hundreds responded to these simple cross-cultural presentations of the Gospel.

Later, a pastor from Fiji was approached by a young Swiss who inquired about the stadium event. When the pastor explained the Gospel, the man invited him home where the whole family trusted Christ as Lord and Savior.

"Imagine," said this young citizen of the land of the Reformation. "You came all the way from the South Pacific to share a message we should have known in this country for centuries."

Remember that the primary reason your church exists is to declare the gospel, the news that through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, God makes available a power to become new persons, experience new liberty, and become part of a new people who serve a new Master.

Unfortunately, there are times when it seems the Gospel doesn't

Continued on next page

work; when it fails to bring changes in those who claim to follow Christ. What short-circuits the Gospel's power?

In some cases a "believer" fails to turn from sin and submit to the lordship Christ demands. An individual may pray to receive salvation or walk forward in response to an invitation, but there is no handing over of one's personality to Christ. Without such submission, power fails to operate.

Or perhaps we expect too much too soon. True, God sometimes performs an overnight miracle, but it usually takes much longer to build a mature Christian. Christ's entry into one's life may be likened to an invasion, where a force establishes a beachhead in enemy occupied territory. Christ brings dramatic changes as we grow in knowing Him and allow Him to advance ever deeper into our lives.

If you are faithfully witnessing, don't be discouraged when hearers turn away. Not all with whom you share Christ will respond, and some who do will not be sincere. Even some we think are sincere will eventually drift away, but keep telling the good news, you will see enough lives changed to realize that the Gospel is "dynamite."

Proud of the Gospel's plan

Here is another contrast between religions devised by human ingenuity and the Gospel revealed by God Himself. In one, men and women are left to their own devices to find God; in the other, God takes the initiative, seeks us out and offers the Gift of Eternal Life.

Evangelist Leighton Ford puts it this way: A rock climber loses his footing and begins to fall. He grabs a little root sticking out of the cliff and screams for help. That is the spiritual predicament of humanity, as individuals discover their danger and grasp for security.

Suppose three men look over the edge and offer to help the victim.

Number one says, "Sir, I see that you are slipping. Try to think of the possibilities in your situation and hold on more firmly."

Number two says, "If you hold on with one hand, I'll give you a copy of the Ten Commandments of Rock Climbing so you won't fall again."

...the primary reason your church exists is to declare the gospel, the news that through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, God makes available a power to become new persons...

Then number three speaks, "Have you considered your situation with the Asian or African hanging over there? I think your American root is really superior to the Asian or African variety."

Are any of these options good news for the fallen climber? The only hope would be for someone to reach down, grasp a wrist and pull the man up.

Scripture pictures Christ as the strong right arm of God, who intervenes in our human predicament, reaches down to rescue us and lifts us from our lostness. We may be proud of a Gospel that does that.

Here is the divine rescue operation in a nutshell: First, the Bible teaches that God created us to find our highest fulfillment in fellowship with the true and living God, but all of us rebel against Him. In the language of the Scripture, "We have left God's paths to follow our own" (Isaiah 53:6, *The Living Bible*). Our rejection of God leads to separation from Him.

Yet He keeps on loving us, sending His Son to mend that broken relationship. Jesus Christ died on the cross to pay the penalty we deserve, and rose from the grave to offer new life and fellowship with God to all who believe.

What is your part and mine? We agree with God that what He says about our condition is true. We are sinners; we are in rebellion against Him. Then we are to believe that forgiveness and eternal life have been purchased for us by His death on the cross. Finally, and this is the key step, we act on this information and make a personal commitment to Christ. We open our lives to Him as Savior and determine to serve Him as Lord.

Perhaps this "for example" will clarify what this step involves. I travel to a major airport where a big jet is ready to leave for Honolulu. I understand that a ticket for the journey is available at no cost to me. My fare has already been paid by another.

I walk around the terminal asking questions. How large is the plane? How fast? How long will the

Continued on page 22

VBS Can Be The Best Thing In A Kid's Summer!

STANDARD'S "CHAMPIONS FOR JESUS" VBS PROGRAM WILL BRING THEM BACK!

It's tough to compete with all the fun things Summer vacation has to offer. But Standard's new VBS program for 1988 is so innovative, so exciting, so involving, and so relevant to the real needs of today's generation of VBS students, your VBS will be packed to overflowing!

"CHAMPIONS FOR JESUS" will bring back the "dropouts" and bring in new faces you haven't seen before. And a first-time child can lead to first-time families—and church growth as you've never experienced it!

KIDS COME ALIVE AT VICTORY VILLAGE!

"Victory Village" is an imaginary place that becomes very real to kids through Standard's CHAMPIONS FOR JESUS VBS PROGRAM. They'll meet three Bible "coaches"—Peter, Paul, and John the Baptist—who demonstrate that everyone's a champion because of Jesus Christ.

Victory Village is filled with action—music, games, contests, award certificates—things that build excitement and make every child a winner! Over 25 new original songs create a fresh, compelling atmosphere that will capture the young listener's heart.

Students at Victory Village will gain a sense of belonging as well as a true feeling of accomplishment. They'll learn that Jesus is on their "team" and each of them can share in His victory!

Standard is ever-mindful that VBS is often a child's first contact with the Gospel, so every effort is made to bring the child to saving knowledge of Jesus Christ.

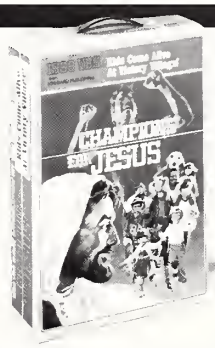
DISCOVER HOW SPECIAL VBS CAN BE! ORDER YOUR INTRODUCTORY KIT, VIDEO/FILMSTRIP AND FREE PLANBOOK TODAY.

It's not too early to begin planning for your Summer VBS session. With that in mind, we are offering three ways for you to become acquainted with "CHAMPIONS FOR JESUS."

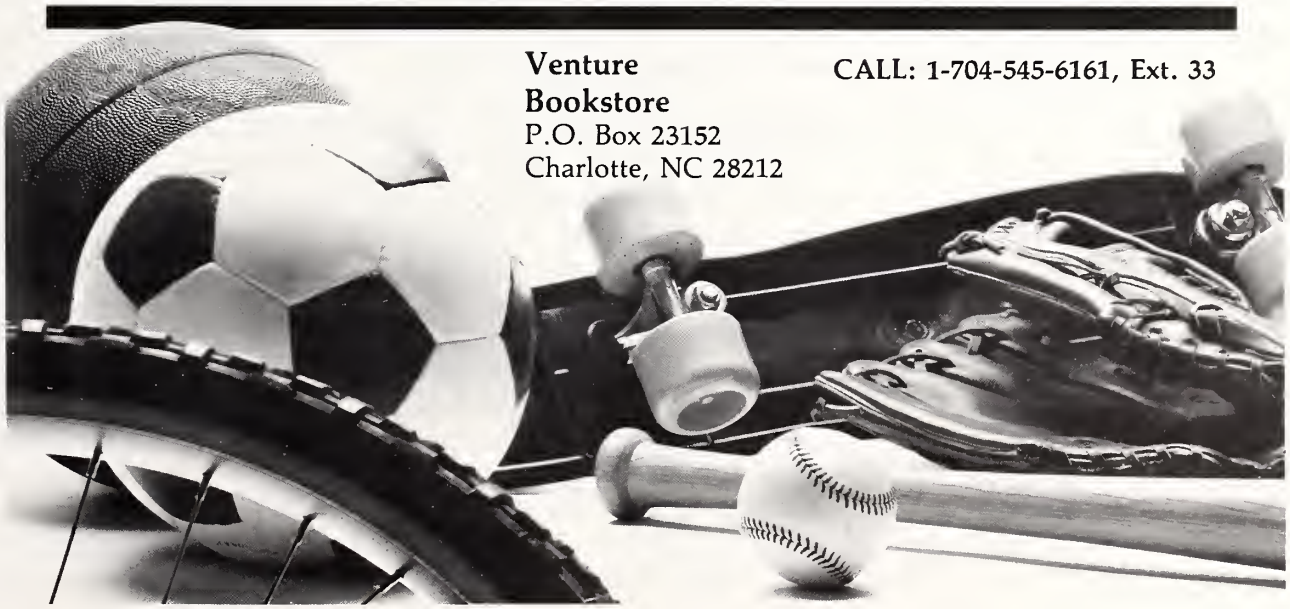
The first is our complete Introductory Kit with sample materials, leader's program guide, including a Planbook, recruiting materials and all other key elements of this action filled course. The Kit for those who want to use the five-day program is #9801, for $19.95, and for those choosing the ten-day program is #9800, for $22.95. Both are returnable for full refund, and the price of either will save you many dollars!

Second, you can *see* the new VBS in action by ordering our information-packed video #9080, or filmstrip #9803, for only $12.95.

The third is a FREE PLANBOOK, a colorful guide to all of the easy-to-teach VBS materials for 1988 available from Standard Publishing.



STANDARD'S VBS MAKES EVERY KID A WINNER!

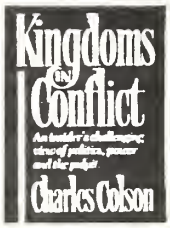


Venture Bookstore
P.O. Box 23152
Charlotte, NC 28212

CALL: 1-704-545-6161, Ext. 33

Can the Government Do Everything?

Kingdoms in Conflict: An Insider's Challenging View of Politics, Power, and the Pulpit by Charles Colson. Co-published by William Morrow and Zondervan: 1987.



Since 1976, evangelical Christians have become more active in politics. Involvement with a variety of issues and concerns combined with active support of some political candidates have caused politicians, journalists, and lobbyists to recognize theologically conservative Christians as a major interest group in America.

Charles Colson writes as one who appreciates the growing concern evangelicals have displayed for social concern, government, and public policy. But he also recognizes the problems that surface in the face of Christian political activity. Can we change society through legislation? Should clergy seek political office? Do some Christians use questionable methods to achieve what they consider Biblical goals? What is the proper relationship between government and church in a democratic society?

In **Kingdoms of Conflict**, Colson addresses these and many more questions surrounding the relationship between church and state. This book is broad in scope. The author has done his homework well especially in viewing the tension between the religion and politics realms as not simply an American problem but an age old question that has affected the world throughout history.

Colson also mixes traditional non-fiction narrative writing with the tremendous story-telling ability he first displayed in his previous book, *Loving God*. From a fictional U.S. President, trying to square dispensational theology with a crucial decision about Mideast security, to the passionate struggle of German pastors Detrich Bonhoeffer and Martin Niemoller against Adolf Hitler, Colson illustrates the danger when church and state become too intertwined or too separate.

The political illusion

Toward the end of **Kingdoms in Conflict**, the author recounts the story of the 1986 democratic revolution in the Philippines. In an account that reads like today's newspaper, Colson describes the fall of Ferdinand Marcos, the intervention of Roman Catholic Archbishop Jaime Sin, and the actions of millions of Filipinos instrumental in bringing Corazon Aquino to power. Besides being fascinating reading, Colson hammers home what this reviewer sees as the books central theme: "The belief that government is autonomous, the ultimate repository of power, the solution to all society's ills, is the greatest impostor of the twentieth century."

In other words, government cannot solve all of our problems. Government isn't the highest or final authority that we answer to. Columnist William Buckley writes of the "creeping notion that the American dream is one that can be fulfilled without any sense of a bond to higher laws than those that emerge from yesterday's parliamentary exercise." French theologian and lawyer Jacques Ellul called this creeping notion, *The Political Illusion*.

That illustration is according to Colson, "the myth that all human problems are political and solvable by all powerful human institutions." And while it's easy for Christians to see the political illusion at work in communism, nazism, and socialism, Colson reminds us of the words of one popular religious leader identified with the so-called Christian New Right: "The only way to have a genuine spiritual revival is to have legislative reform...I think we have been legislated out of the possibility of a spiritual revival."

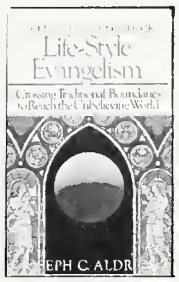
Such thinking has no place in the church. And Colson helps us understand that we must not place our ultimate confidence in politics or the fashionable ideologies of our time. God remains the final authority and Christians must temper their political involvement with that reality. While Christians must be concerned with issues and involved in the democratic process, evangelism and ministries of compassion must have priority since they are the things that build the Kingdom of God.

Charles Colson has written an electrifying, fascinating book. I hope that before you vote in 1988, you'll read **Kingdoms in Conflict.** You'll gain a solid understanding of how religion and government should relate in a democratic society.

—Bob Mayer

Effective evangelism in the local church

Lifestyle Evangelism by Joseph Aldrich; Published by Multnomah Press: 1983;



Lifestyle Evangelism is by far the best book I've read concerning personal and local church evangelism. The principles in this book provide a practical way of fulfilling the Great Commission through our relationships with non-christan friends and relatives.

The goal of lifestyle evangelism is to mobilize a majority of Christians to be involved in evangelism as a way of life. Evangelism is not simply a program. It is not to be compartmentalized in personal life or corporate ministry. It is more than what one should do on a Tuesday night!

Lifestyle evangelism is also more effective than "cold-contact" evangelism in that it encourages believers to build close relationships with non-christians. These relationships provide an atmosphere of trust in which the gospel can be lived and shared. Any local church which seeks to build this kind of lifestyle in its people will find greater effectiveness in evangelism.

The text is divided into three parts: Evangelism as it should be; evangelism and the local church; and evangelism and you.

Evangelism as it should be emphasizes one main point; a person must *be* Good News before he can share Good News. The author refers to this person as a "living epistle." A "living epistle" displays the love of Christ in his daily life, builds bridges to develop friendships with non-christians, and finds ways of identifying with them.

This penetration into the non-christian culture is essential if the unbeliever is to see and hear the Good News in a relevant and meaningful way. Effective evangelism takes place when the non-christian is willing to hear and consider accepting the Good News. The Good News must be just that, good news.

Evangelism and the local church (section 2) links the church's role in edification to evangelism. Only a healthy church can produce healthy believers who practice evangelism as a way of life. The emphasis in this part of the text is to outline what makes a healthy church. The author identifies a healthy church by answering four key questions: What type of people do we want to deploy? What kind of church makes possible this kind of person? What kind of leadership team makes possible this kind of church? What kind of pastor makes possible this kind of leadership team?

The church wants to deploy people who are continuously developing the fruits of the Spirit in Galatians 5. They are to be people who possess the characteristics of Acts 2: devotion to learning, fellowship, worship, and service. The church which builds this kind of person will be a learning center. It will seek to develop mature believers. It will be a healing communion. It will be a responding community; a community which responds to what Christ has done and is doing through praise and adoration. It will be a deploying agency. The church will send its people out to love and help those who are in need of Good News.

In order for a church to accomplish these tasks there must be a spiritually mature leadership team. The lifestyle of the leadership team is vital because it will become the lifestyle of the body in general. The pastor who makes this leadership team possible will be one who is growing and exemplifying the fruits of the Spirit, practicing the qualities mentioned in Acts 2, and is developing the qualities of leadership as outlined in Titus and Timothy.

The final part of the text, *Evangelism and You,* provides specific suggestions for developing relationships which are conducive to sharing the Good News. There are three areas of lifestyle evangelism addressed here: evangelistic home Bible studies, developing redemptive relationships, and communicating the message of the gospel. Each of these are explained in detail in order to help the reader apply lifestyle evangelism to his neighbors, friends, and relatives. It helps the reader see how he can love his "neighbor" to Christ.

—John Gallagher

A graduate of Berkshire Christian College and Luther Rice Seminary, John Gallagher is pastor of Shiloh Advent Christian Church in Monroe, North Carolina.

Caroline Michael
Director

Wise Mary — Busy Martha

by Valerie Halloran

There were two sisters long ago
Who lived in Bethany.
One sister's name was Martha,
And the other's name was Mary.

These women looked so much alike
When standing side by side;
But they really were quite different
If you knew them each inside.

Now Martha was the busy type,
She always did her chores.
She swept and dusted all the rooms,
She scrubbed and mopped the floors.

But when sister Mary did her tasks,
She left some time to ponder.
And as she tidied up the house,
She thought upon God's wonders.

The women knew the Savior
And Jesus loved them well.
He often went to visit them
The Gospel story tells.

One day they were about their work
When Jesus came to town
Martha heard and asked Him, "Please, my Lord
Come in and sit right down."

Jesus gratefully accepted
As Mary took His cloak.
She sat right down before Him
To listen as He spoke.

Martha ran into the kitchen
To bake a loaf of bread.
As she worked, a list of things to do
Went buzzing through her head.

"I must use my finest dishes
For the Master needs the best.
And I'll set a royal table
To please our honored guest.

Oh yes, we'll need some candles
And I'll get the placemats out.
A dash of salt with help this stew...
Where's that Mary anyhow?

Meanwhile as Martha worked,
Setting the table and baking bread,
Mary just sat there listening
To each word her Savior said.

Mary looked with love at Jesus
As He spoke the words of truth.
She delighted in each sentence,
For Jesus made all things new.

Back in the kitchen Martha murmured
At all she had to do.
Finally she called out,
"Sister Mary, where are you?

"My Lord, are You not bothered
That I'm working all alone?
Tell my sister to come help me;
There is plenty to be done."

Martha waited for an answer
With her hands upon her hips.
But she didn't then expect to hear
These words from Jesus' lips:

"Oh Martha, my dear Martha,
Why are you bothered so?
Don't you want to sit and talk with Me
Before I have to go?

Just a few things now are needed,
Yes, really only one.
Your sister's found the answer,
Because to Me she's come.

You worry about dishes
And the food that we will eat
While Mary's made the best choice
To listen at My feet.

The food will soon be eaten
And our time here will be gone.
But the words that Mary hears Me speak
Will go on and on and on."

Continued on page 21

The Desire of God's Heart

Margaret Helms

This devotional challenge was given by Philippines missionary Margaret Helms at the WHFMS National Convention last June in Charleston, West Virginia.

Today many seem confused as to the real purpose of the Woman's Home and Foreign Mission Society. The number of groups and ladies involved have declined. As Advent Christians we can be proud of our heritage and some of the accomplishments of the past. But we cannot live in the past. We are always required to live in the present and look to the future. There must always be an adjustment to life as we find it, if we are to continue to be a viable organization both locally and nationally. Why do we have WHFMS? Is it viable for today or should it be incorporated into missions for the whole church?

Some pastors and local churches seem threatened by the "power" and leadership of the WHFMS. Others have allowed the ladies to carry the total burden of missions promotion, finance, and education. I personally believe that there is still a vital part that women can and should play in the total mission program.

I believe we must again catch the vision from God's viewpoint. What is the desire of God's heart? In 2 Peter 3:3-9 we see that the Lord's desire is that not even one person perish but that all should come to repentance. Peter also writes that the reason the Lord delays His coming is to give time for this to happen.

In Matthew 9:35-38 we see that as Jesus went out among people, he saw their great needs — physical, mental, and spiritual — and was moved with compassion. His compassion caused Him to reach out to people in need. He preached the good news of salvation from sin, but also ministered to the total needs of man.

Because of man's great need, Jesus challenged His followers not only to minister to those needs but to pray that God would raise up others to share the good news and minister to people. The urgency He felt was conveyed through His comparing His people to a "harvest" — something not to be delayed lest the crop be lost.

How easily we speak of the second coming of Christ and that we are Advent Christians — as long as we are in the church or talking to fellow believers. But Jesus says that "the proof of the pudding is in the eating" — our actions prove what we truly believe. Matthew 24:14 states that when this Gospel of the Kingdom is preached in the whole world — giving everyone an opportunity for repentance, *then*, the end will come.

Again we see the theme of 2 Peter 3, God's desire that none should perish. In John 14:21 Jesus says that our obedience to what He desires is a proof of our love to Him. Does the fact that members of your family, your friends, or neighbors have not come to Jesus for salvation burden your heart? Sometimes we hear statistics of the number who are lost. But to us, they are only numbers. It only hurts when it's someone close to us. But God wants us to catch the essence of His heartbreak and burden — people everywhere who need to repent.

A close friend related that because of pain, sickness, and poor health her husband had said he was ready to die. He had served the Lord faithfully and was not ashamed to meet the Lord. The wife replied — "I'm not yet ready because our child is still living in sin." Feel the mixture of the physical pain and yet an unwillingness to give up because a loved one was not ready to stand before God.

Do we as WHFMS ladies feel the heartbeat of God for the salvation of the lost? Are our activities, meetings, and personal lives lived toward that end? □

Margaret, from Monroe, North Carolina, is our Philippine field superintendent. New ministries she has started since returning to Cebu, Philippines last fall include a leadership training class in Banilad and a Bible study with seventeen attending.

CONNIE JONES
902 Hemlock Dr. NE, Lenoir, NC 28645

What Happened When I Died

Connie Jones

Do any of you find it difficult to wait in line? Recently, I heard Jack tell our son, Daniel, that he could do the world a favor by writing an article on "100 Creative Ways to Stand in Line." Often, while waiting in the supermarket checkout line, I find myself reading the headlines on popular newspapers displayed there. Such amazing headlines as, "Woman Gives Birth to Baby After Death," or "Wife Watches as Husband Turns into Werewolf" are not uncommon.

Not long ago, my attention was arrested by the headline, "What Happened When I Died?" I don't know who wrote it or what that person experienced, but it started me thinking on a new wave-length.

Paul was able to say in 1 Corinthians 15:31, "I die daily." Indeed he told the Corinthian Christians, "For we who are alive are always being given over to death for Jesus' sake; so that His life may be revealed in our mortal body," (2 Corinthians 4:11).

This was not a new concept. Christ Himself said, "...I tell you the truth, unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds," (John 12:24).

So, I asked myself, "What happened when I died?"

I remembered when Jack and I stopped dating because we couldn't agree on a calling to missions. I died a little that day, but several months later, God spoke to Jack at a Berkshire Christian College missions conference and gave him back to me fully committed to following His leading.

I recalled racing along a snowy road in northern Maine in an ambulance not certain if my infant son was alive or dead, and telling the Lord, "You gave him to me. Now do as you see fit." I died a little, but God restored to me a son who is committed to finding the purpose God had for his life when he spared him that night.

My mind went back to the tears Jack and I shared as we crossed the Pacific to take up a new ministry at Vernon Homes. We died a little that night as we left a country and a group of Christians whom we loved dearly. Yet at our Vernon church, and here in Lenoir we have found Christians who helped provide the nurture our children needed at that formative time in their lives.

Last summer at General Conference I was challenged by Dr. David Dean's message and prayed that God would show me new avenues of service. When I returned home, He had one waiting for me. It meant opening my already crowded home to take in a young girl.

I argued with God, "I've no room — it will invade my family's privacy — there will be so many new problems to solve." But together our family died to selfishness and opened our home. God has opened our hearts and a beautiful new daughter has blessed our home with her awakening spiritual growth.

Yes, there have been times when I have died to self and to this world, but always God has blessed me by giving back much more than I ever lost. Recognizing this, I wonder, "Why is it so hard to die? Why must I wrack my brain searching for those occurrences of death? Why isn't it a more daily occasion?"

I'm praying that God will give me increased faith so that I can say more frequently, "I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me," (Galatians 2:20a).

Do you have need for that kind of prayer too? What spiritual life are we missing for lack of dying?

Connie Jones is National WHFMS Spiritual Life Chairman.

TRP Update

The Trained Resource Person program has been widely utilized in its initial year. Thirty-eight of the TRPs presented over seventy workshops in 1987. Workshops have been presented in all five regions. It is most gratifying to have such wide use of the workshop resources available to our women's groups through the services of the TRPs.

Currently there are four workshops available:

1. Is Your Programming on Target?
Evaluating; planning an effective meeting

2. Everyday Evangelism
Why witness and how to witness naturally

3. Developing a Special Interest Group
Recognizing needs and getting a group started

4. How to Increase Membership
How to build membership and involve new women

Two hours are needed for a workshop presentation. Any expenses incurred by the TRP such as travel and media material rental should be reimbursed by the local group.

Please send your request for a specified workshop and the approximate date you'd like the presentation to the Department of Women's Ministries, P.O. Box 23152, Charlotte, NC 28212.

Wise Mary - Busy Martha **Cont. from pg. 18**

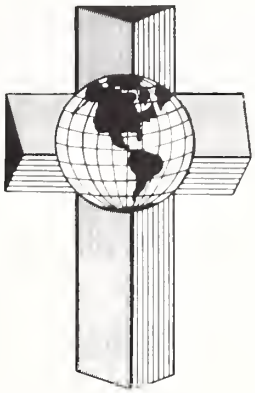
Martha then could say no more
For she knew His words were true.
And she saw to sit and listen
Was the best thing she could do.

And those words that Jesus spoke
Can still be heard today.
Which sister should we each be like
When Jesus comes our way?

It's so easy to get busy
Doing things to please the Lord.
Let us learn from sister Mary
To stop and listen to His Word.

Valerie finds fulfillment in being involved in her husband's ministry as well as in using her gifts in writing and singing her own music. Paul and Valerie are serving our church at Chatsworth Lake, California, and they have four children.

Mission Prayer Partnership



MARCH

19 **Praise** the Lord for recent decisions in the **Memphis work.**

20 **Pray** for the national Advent Christian radio ministry outreach.

21 **Pray** for our national pastors in the Philippines.

22 **Pray** for **Arturo and Rosa Angulo** and their ministry in Ensenada. Remember especially Rosa on this her birthday.

23 **Pray** for the students in **Oro Bible College** as they prepare for their final exams.

24 **Pray** for **Alice Brown** during this busy time at the close of a school year.

25 **Pray** for Executive Vice-president **David Northup** with the many responsibilities that he carries. Especially remember him on this his birthday.

26 **Pray** for **Beryl Joy Hollis** that the Lord would continue to strengthen her today.

27 **Pray** for superintendent **Marion Damon** as she cares for the mission work in India.

28 **Pray** for **Barbara White** as she assists the church at Kodaikanal.

29 **Pray** for the Home Mission pastors in the United States.

30 **Pray** for the work of the urban Task Force as they seek to minister in urban centers.

31 **Praise** the Lord for our salvation purchased by Jesus' death upon the cross.

APRIL

2 **Pray** that the Lord would direct you to in-

Prayer Partnership

vite someone to church with you this weekend.

3 **Praise** the Lord for a living, reigning and coming Christ.

4 **Pray** that we may be more diligent as a people sharing the risen Christ to a needy world.

5 **Pray** for **Abel Garcia** and his jail ministry near San Diego, California.

6 **Pray** for **Thambusamy and Victoria Devairakkam** as they care for the Advent Christian work in Malaysia.

7 **Pray** for **Lucas and Beulah Devasahayam** that they would see many people finding Christ under their ministry.

8 **Pray** for **E.K. Akpan** as he superintends the Advent Christian work in Nigeria.

9 **Pray** for our chaplains as they minister to needy servicemen across our country.

10 **Pray** for **David Vignali** and his many duties in the Philippines.

11 **Pray** for superintendent **Margaret Helms** as she works at training national leadership to share their faith in Christ.

12 **Pray** for **Frank and Judy Jewett** as they prepare to come home for a much needed furlough.

13 **Pray** for the **Jewett children,** especially for **Latitia** on her birthday.

14 **Pray** for our national pastors in Nigeria that God would bless their ministry.

15 **Pray** for **Austin and Dorothy Warriner** and especially their work at Asukano, Japan.

16 **Pray** for the **Powers family** and their ministry of assistance to the Japanese churches.

17 **Pray** for our Mexican workers in Tijuana and Ensenada.

18 **Pray** for **Francis and Lynne Ssebikindu** in their busy schedule of ministry in Memphis.

Are You Proud of the Gospel? Cont. from pg. 14

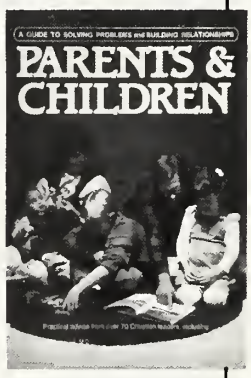
trip take? What route will be covered? I accept the information I am given for I have known other travelers who verify these facts. But knowing this data will never carry me across the Pacific. I may have the desire to take the flight and may actually hold the tickets in my hand, but I may stand there until I drop without reaching the Islands. Only as I step on board the giant jet, sever connections with the ground, and commit myself for better or worse to the air carrier, will I receive the benefit offered to me.

In a similar way saving faith means much more than believing many things, even true things about Christ. It means moving out upon Him, trusting His atoning love for forgiveness and eternal life. □

David S.McCarthy is pastor of the Advent Christian Church in Aurora, Illinois.

Q: ***Where can you find over 70 family counselors together in one place at the same time?***

A:



Parents and Children brings together over 70 of the most respected names in family counseling. Names like Howard Hendricks, Dr. Grace Ketterman and David Seamands. And they answer your most pressing questions about raising children in today's world. $14.95

Venture Bookstore
P.O. Box 23152
Charlotte, NC 28212

VICTOR BOOKS A Division of Scripture Press Publications, Inc.

Is Your Home Safe and Secure?

William Batson

A vivid childhood memory of mine is a summer electrical storm interrupting our work in the fields at my grandparents' North Carolina farm. With lightning flashing around us and thunder booming through the sky, I ran for the shelter of the "old house." Once inside I found a corner to sit in, for I had been told to stay away from windows and doors in case lightning entered the house. That corner provided a place of safety and security.

Edith Schaeffer describes the family as a shelter from the storms of life, offering us a place of safety and security. A young girl was asked what home meant to her. She replied, "Home is the place you go when it gets dark." What a blessing for a child to have the security of a loving home. How sad that for too many children, home is not a place of safety and security.

Factors that cause insecurity

What conditions create insecurity for a child? Parental conflict is one. Few things are more threatening to a child than to see the people on whom his life depends frequently clashing. I must confess that Cindy and I have had a few combustible conversations that our children have witnessed. After one session of speaking our minds one of our daughters asked if we were headed for divorce court! We assured her that we were not and nothing we said would stop us from loving each other or them.

To have differences and to resolve them in a loving way teaches a child how to positively handle conflict in his own life. This is not true where parents are always in conflict.

The mobility of many of today's families creates insecurity in children. Our first-born is conscious of the hazards of pastoral ministry. Occasionally she asks for reassurance that I am not considering a move to another church.

One source reveals that one-fourth of our population moves each year. Few families stay at the same house for more than ten years. Many of us lack the strengthening and stabilizing forces of our extended family.

A child can easily develop feelings of insecurity when having to adjust to new friends, a new school, a new house, and a host of other new experiences. These feelings are heightened when he does not enjoy the warmth and strength of deep love relationships within the family.

A lack of clear boundaries for behavior is another condition that creates insecurity. Our children need some rules for life in order to enjoy a sense of well-being. They may balk, complain, and even accuse us of treating them unfairly. But secretly, they are pleased because the boundaries give them a sense of Mom and Dad's loving care.

Absence of parents

The absence of parents inhibits a child's sense of security. I heard a news story of a six-year-old who, upon awaking on Christmas morning, found no presents and no mother. Thinking Santa Claus had been involved in a terrible accident, he called the "911" emergency number to report his concern to the police. The officer assured him that Santa was not harmed and would soon be there. Other policemen quickly gathered up what toys they could find. Dressed in a Santa suit one of them delivered the toys to the child and a younger sister. The mother had left the children alone to be with her boyfriend.

That's an extreme case. However, many children come home from school to an empty house. The absence of parents in the crucial formative years is a growing problem as increasing numbers of children are placed in day care centers. Our material priorities must be balanced with the effect they have on our child's sense of security.

A child is crushed if he thinks his parents do not like him, do not have time for him, or did not want him in the first place. A sense of belonging is essential for a child's security and feeling of worth.

How are feelings of belonging generated? John M. Drescher advises that a family do things together. Share common concerns and trust each other with responsibilities. Keep the person rather than the gifts central when celebrating birthdays. Offer prayers for the child in his presence. Value his opinions and include him in the serious and fun experiences of the family.

Drescher reminds us that emotional and spiritual security are much more important than economic and physical security. Even a child can endure poverty, hunger, suffering, and danger to an amazing degree if he has emotional and spiritual security.

We can build a secure environment for our children by turning the preceding negative conditions into positive statements. As we do, our homes will become places where each of us feel loved, accepted, and secure — a shelter from the storms of life. □

William Batson is pastor of the Advent Christian Church in Portsmouth, New Hampshire.

Your Servants for Christ's Cause

International Missionaries

Philippines

Alice Brown (March 24)
Box 223
Cagayan de Oro City 8401
PHILIPPINES

Margaret Helms (September 18)
P.O. Box 263
Cebu City 6401
PHILIPPINES

Frank and Judy Jewett
(December 11 and January 29)
Danny Jewett (June 13, 1976)
Timmy Jewett (June 26, 1978)
Letitia Jewett (April 13, 1980)
P.O. Box 263
Cebu City 6401
PHILIPPINES

David Vignali (May 10)
P.O. Box 263
Cebu City 6401
PHILIPPINES

Japan

Floyd and Musa Powers
(October 8 and February 28)
Rebecca Powers (Nov. 11, 1971)
18 - 11- 4 Motoyama Kita cho
Higashinada ku, Kobe shi 658
JAPAN

Austin and Dorothy Warriner
(January 1 and January 18)
5-3-37 Okayama Higashi
Shijonawate Shi
Osaka 575
JAPAN

India

Marion Damon (March 27)
Box 17, Andivilla
Kodaikanal 624101
INDIA

Beryl Joy Hollis (December 16)
American Advent Mission
Velacheri, Madras 600 042
INDIA

Barbara White (January 14)
Box 17, Andivilla
Kodaikanal 624101
INDIA

On Leave

Bessie Smith (March 27)
Box 657, Waukewan Street
Meredith, NH 03253

National Missionaries

Malaysia

ıambusamy and
ctoria Devairakkam
., Jalan Sayang Housing Trust
)00 Kluang, Johor
ALAYSIA

cas and Beulah Devasahayam
Jalan Cempaka
nan Gembira
'00 Banting, Selangor
ALAYSIA

Memphis

Francis and Lyne Ssebikindu
(May 13 and May 8)
Faith Nancy (September 28, 1982)
Ashley Grace (November 21, 1985)
2590 Faxon Avenue
Memphis, TN 38112

Mexico

Abel Garcia-Lara
368 Anita Street, Sp. 62
Chula Vista, CA 92011

Alberto Gomez Ramos
Arturo Angulo Rosas
Ever Perez Morales
c/o Abel Garcia-Lara

Nigeria

E. A. Akpan—Superintendent
Nigerian Advent Christian Mission
P.O. Box 1642
Uyo; Akwa Ibom State
NIGERIA

Advent Christian General Conference
P.O. Box 23152
Charlotte, NC 28212

old Patterson; World Missions
lie Griswold; Christian Education
oline Michael; Women's Ministries

Robert W. Cole; Finance
Robert Mayer; Publications
David Northup; Executive Vice-president

AC04343
University of North Carolina
Serials Dept Davis Library
080 A
Chapel Hill, NC 27514

C286.7
A24

Advent Christian WITNESS

April 1988

The Gospel: God's Message For Our World

pages twelve and sixteen

FEATURES

Out of the Gray Twilight 4

What do we fear most? Pastor Clayton Blackstone shows how Jesus Christ enables us to face fear and hopelessness.

Turning Red Tape into God's Blessing 8

In this interview, missionaries Austin and Dorothy Warriner tell how a closed door to India led them to serve Christ in Japan.

Reaching the World for Jesus Christ 12

A photo directory of Advent Christian missionaries serving Jesus Christ worldwide.

The Prosperity Heresy 14

Evangelist Tony Evans discusses why the so-called Prosperity Gospel is a dangerous diversion from Biblical truth.

What is the Gospel? 16

Throughout history, Christians have always been tempted to add extra rules and conditions to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Gordon Isaac calls us to resist that impulse and gives us a clear, biblical presentation of what the Gospel is.

DEPARTMENTS

From the Editor 3

Women's Ministries 18

Prayer Partnership 21

Opinion 23

ON THE COVER:

The world as viewed from Apollo 17. Several articles in this issue explore the gospel's message for people in our world. This issue also introduces you to Advent Christians who seek to introduce women and men to Jesus Christ through world missions.

photo courtesy of NASA

Volume 36 Number 4

Advent Christian WITNESS

Editor **Robert Mayer**

Contributing Editors **Caroline Michael, Harold Patterson, William Batson, Clayton Blackstone, David McCarthy**

Art Director **Linda Perault**

Typesetting **Susan Gettis**

The Advent Christian Witness (ISSN #007-740) is published monthly except for a combined July-August issue by the Advent Christian General Conference of America, 14601 Albemarle Road, P.O. Box 23152, Charlotte, N.C. 28212. Subscription rates in the United States and Canada: One year, $11.00. Single copy: $1.00. Overseas rate: One year, $14.00. Second class postage paid at Charlotte, N.C. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Advent Christian Witness, P.O. Box 23152, Charlotte, N.C. 28212.

As the official publication of the Advent Christian General Conference, the Advent Christian Witness publishes the teachings of the Advent Christian Church and promotes the task of evangelism both in North America and around the world. The views expressed in this magazine are those of the author and may not necessarily reflect those of the editor or the Advent Christian General Conference. Member: Evangelical Press Association.

Copyright © 1988 by the Advent Christian General Conference of America, Inc.

FROM THE EDITOR

Religious Freedom Under Attack in Congress

Religious freedom is under attack in the United States Congress. The so-called "Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987", (Senate Bill #557) which has just passed the United States Senate has little to do with Civil Rights. It has a lot to do with restricting the religious freedom that individuals, churches, and Christian organizations enjoy in the United States.

In 1984, the United States Supreme Court ruled in the Grove City College case that federal rules and guidelines apply only to specific programs of the institution that receive direct government aid. For example, a religious hospital that does not perform abortions for moral reasons cannot be forced to perform them if they receive medicare money as payment for senior citizen hospital care. A Bible school that does not admit practicing homosexuals cannot be forced to do so because some of their students receive federal education loans or grants. All of that will change if Senate Bill #557 becomes law.

But what I find most objectionable about this bill is the underhanded effort to slip this by the American people under the guise of civil rights. We've come far as a nation in addressing the discrimination that people of color have experienced. We've begun to realize that the freedoms in the constitution are for all people no matter their race, religious heritage, or cultural background. We still need to go further especially in addressing the economic isolation and poverty that many Americans of all races experience.

But this dishonest attempt to restrict religious freedom under the guise of civil rights will foster alienation, not harmony among our people. Subjecting churches and Christian organizations to detailed federal regulation will not guarantee better economic opportunities. Forcing Christian agencies to act against their conscience and religious principles cheapens the very constitution that we claim is for all American citizens.

As Christians, we should be concerned about civil rights. Scripture clearly teaches the truth expressed by the song we learned in Sunday school, "Red and yellow, black and white, they are precious in His sight; Jesus loves the little children of the world." President Lincoln expressed that truth in a different context when he spoke of a nation "conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal."

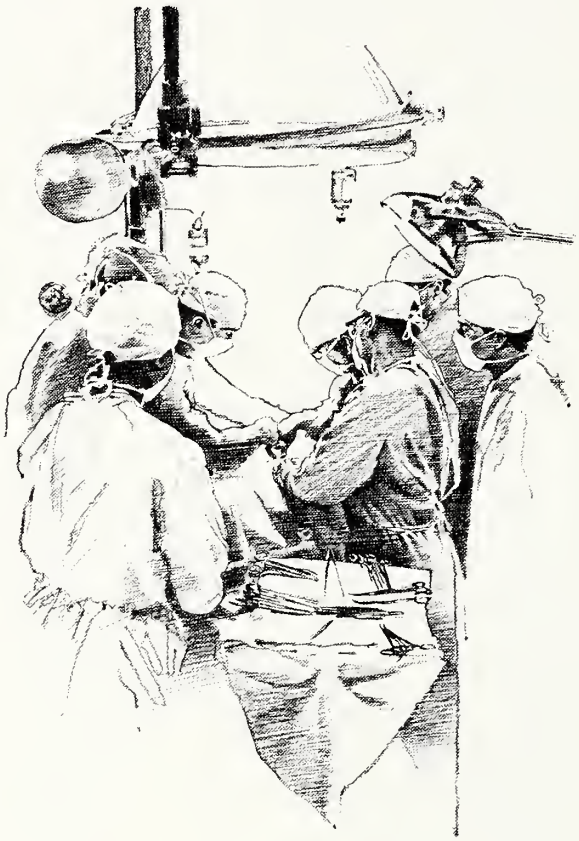
This bill betrays the words of Lincoln and replaces concern for civil rights with the desire of some to regulate and restrict the freedom of religious people and organizations to practice their faith. That's dangerous and uncalled for.

Senate Bill #557 now goes to the House of Representatives for consideration. President Reagan has promised a veto if it reaches his desk. In the President's words, "It is a bill whose vague and sweeping language threatens to subject nearly every facet of American life — from the corner grocer to the local church or synagogue, to local and state government — to intrusive regulation by federal agencies and courts."

I hope that you'll take time to learn more about the so-called "Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987" and then contact your congressional representative. Hopefully, this bill will never reach the President's desk because the American people will be successful in communicating to their elected representatives that restricting the freedom of religious people and organizations to freely practice their faith has no place in America. □

OUT OF THE GRAY TWILIGHT

Clayton Blackstone



The steady hum of the respirators, the occasional beeps of the monitors and the unmistakable smell of the hospital produce a sobering effect. We are mere mortals who live in a world of uncertainty.

Several months ago, my Dad lay in the Intensive Care Unit of a small hospital hovering between life and death. In the room beside him another man clung to life, his heart weakened by five cardiac arrests in succession. Beside him, a lady labored to keep breathing with the aid of a respirator.

Code 99! Panic. Into which room did the crash cart go? Dad? Mr. Harris? Mrs. Moody?

Mr. Harris. Strange...our sense of relief mingled with empathy as we agonized with the family.

Code 99! Panic again. We strained to see where the nurses rushed with the crash cart. It was Mrs. Moody this time. Again the relief only temporary as we watched the eyes of her husband Roy. He had often worked with members of our family on the farm until her health kept him at home tending her.

Mr. Harris coded twice more. Fluid was building up around his heart. He was drowning. "Please don't code again," the family asked. Hope evaporated, and they sat waiting for the inevitable. At 6:30 a.m., Sunday morning, Mr. Harris died, and we cried together.

On the morning our family normally gathered to honor the resurrected Lord, we confronted dreaded death. In this instance, we also encountered the absence of hope.

The experience left me with several insights into myself, my family and the people who surround me. During those days, fear haunted me. It cast its frightening shadows on the screen of my mind as I tried to rest at night. It woke me during the night. It was my companion throughout the day. It followed me everywhere.

I had never known its power before. Others testified of it, but I suspected an unconfessed spiritual problem. On the morning Mom called to tell me of Dad's second surgery and falling blood pressure, I opened the Psalms and read "He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High will abide in the shade of the Almighty." I quoted those words hundreds of times during the next month. Even then fear often struggled to paralyze me.

In retrospect, a fresh insight encouraged me as I wrestled with what seemed to be my minimal faith. The Author of my faith battled this enemy, too. Luke captured the scene in a moving

portrayal of his anguish.

"Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will but yours be done" (Luke 22:42).

Strength came in the form of an angel, yet the battle continued. Jesus anguished over death and its consequences. He labored under the realization that he would soon bear the entire weight of humanity's sin.

Prayer came more earnestly. Blood oozed from his sweat glands. No human had ever done what Jesus was about to do. Would his Father raise him from the dead? Would the plan, conceived before the foundation of the world come together?

"I will put my trust in him." The writer of Hebrews reminds us that Jesus considered no other option. He was stranded on omnipotence. God was the guarantor of the promise. He faced his fear with the faith of one who knew that his Father never failed.

I had rushed back to Maine, but my presence could not assure Dad's healing. The round the clock vigils my brothers and I pulled at the hospital couldn't bring him back to strength. All the resources at our disposal proved insufficient. No one could answer the question pulsating inside my brain: Will my Dad live?

I cried with Augustine, "I am tossed on a tide that puts me to the proof, and if I could not sob my trouble in Your ear, what hope would I have left to me?" Stranded on God just like Jesus was. What better place? But it is also a frightening place because here I must yield control of the situation. It was my only option. And this act of obedience would tax me to the limits.

"In bringing many sons of glory," writes the author of Hebrews, "it is fitting that God, for whom and through whom everything exists, should make the pioneer of their salvation perfect through suffering" (Hebrews 2:10).

Suffering, including bouts with fear, invades our lives like an unwelcome guest. We protest its presence. We go to great lengths to rid ourselves of the effects. We may faithfully maintain our devotional lives, memorize Scripture, and give thanks in all things and still encounter fear in some unsuspecting moment.

When it does, we should have this firmly embedded in our minds and prominently displayed in some conspicuous spot: *My physical or emotional suffering has the potential of producing refinement in my life as nothing else can.*

God is bringing us to glory. "Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death—that is the devil—and free those who by their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death. For surely it is not angels he helps, but Abraham's decendants. For this reason, he had to be made like his brothers in every way, in order that he might become a merciful and faithful High Priest in service to God, and that he might make atonement for the sins of the people. Because he himself suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted" (Hebrews 2:14-18).

Two days after my Grandmother died, my Grandfather, a pastor of fourty years, said, "Clayton, I have stood beside countless families during their grieving and I thought I understood. I didn't know anything!"

Following Dad's brush with death, I understand what Gramp was saying to me. I have also ministered to people who were in the grip of grief's power, but until now, I never fully comprehended their terror. It is the King of fears.

We all yearn for immortality. We play our little games to insure that when we died we will not be forgotten. The thought that our lives might only be parentheses frightens us. Jesus faced "superfear" with unswerving faith in His Father. He extracted the fear from death by surviving it. With faith in him, what happened to him will happen to us one day. We will survive death, too. He cancelled the fear of the unknown by his own resurrection.

John R.W. Stott recounts an

Continued on next page

experience shared by Elie Wiesel, the 1986 Nobel Peace Prize winner. "Perhaps the most horrifying experience of all was when the guards first tortured and then hanged a young boy, a child with a refined and beautiful face, a sad-eyed angel.

"Just before the hanging, Elie heard someone behind him whisper, 'Where is God? Where is he?' "

"Thousands of prisoners were forced to watch the hanging. It took the boy a half hour to die. They were then forced to march past, looking him full in the face. Behind him, Elie heard the same voice ask, 'Where is God?' "

"Says Wiesel, 'I heard a voice within me answer him: Where is he? Here he is—he is hanging on the gallows...' "

"Wiesel's words were truer than he knew for he was not a Christian. Indeed, in every fiber of his being he rebelled against God for allowing people to be butchered, gassed and burned."

Wiesel writes, "I was alone—terribly alone in a world without God and without man. Without love or mercy."

Stott assesses his dilemna this way. "Could he have said that if in Jesus he had seen God on the gallows?"

With Jesus as my example my fears must be faced, and his resurrection assures that I, too, will overcome.

Emerson once wrote that "he has not learned the lesson of life who does not every day surmount a fear."

I faced it as I boarded the plane for home. Will Dad live long enough for me to see him? Thoughts of the resurrection dulled the cutting edge of fear although the battle raged for weeks. The example of Jesus kept me fighting.

Other fears haunt us in our pilgrimage through this foreign land: Rejection. Flying. Parenthood. Marriage. A job change. Moving to a new city. Going back to school. Developing new friends. Experimenting with ethnic foods. Some of them limit our potential development. Others keep us from making our mark on our world. All of them are real and cause us to tighten inside when making a change is suggested. They must be faced.

Courage does not find its way into our lives by accident. For me at least, it comes as I observe it in others. If they can do it, by the grace of God, so can I.

One man stood head and shoulders above the rest during the dark days of World War 2. The German war machine rolled over the armies of most European countries. Soon only Great Britain remained free of Hitler's rule. While only a resistance movement gave evidence to the independent spirit of Europeans on the continent, the Battle for Britain raged on.

Air raids were commonplace. Each night lights were extinguished to give the German pilots less of a target. The sirens often penetrated the night, sending fear into the hearts of the British. Around them their friends were dying. Their sons and husbands were marching off to war. They stood alone.

But over the BCC each evening came a gravelly. determined voice which gave them courage. He broke all the rules of contemporary politics. He promised nothing but "Blood, toil, sweat, and tears." Fear peered around every corner only to be ordered to flee when he spoke. "Death and sorrow will be the companions of our journey; hardship our garment; constancy and valor our only shield. We must be united. We must be undaunted. We must be inflexible."

And so, more than any other person, Winston Churchill altered the course of Britain during World War 2. Jesus did the same with death. Remember: *The courage with which I face my fear can be a source of inspiration to others as they face theirs.*

Press on. Heed Churchill's admonition: "Success is never final; failure is never fatal; it is the courage to continue that counts." Our Lord's resurrection gives that courage to continue. It is God's signature on the contract of faith. It is the light of hope emerging out of the gray twilight. Jesus faced his fear in Gethsemane by choosing to trust in God. We can do the same. □

A graduate of Berkshire Christian College, Clayton Blackstone is pastor of the Advent Christian Church of New Hope in Lewiston, Idaho.

VBS Can Be The Best Thing In A Kid's Summer!

STANDARD'S "CHAMPIONS FOR JESUS" VBS PROGRAM WILL BRING THEM BACK!

It's tough to compete with all the fun things Summer vacation has to offer. But Standard's new VBS program for 1988 is so innovative, so exciting, so involving, and so relevant to the real needs of today's generation of VBS students, your VBS will be packed to overflowing!

"CHAMPIONS FOR JESUS" will bring back the "dropouts" and bring in new faces you haven't seen before. And a first-time child can lead to first-time families—and church growth as you've never experienced it!

KIDS COME ALIVE AT VICTORY VILLAGE!

"Victory Village" is an imaginary place that becomes very real to kids through Standard's CHAMPIONS FOR JESUS VBS PROGRAM. They'll meet three Bible "coaches"—Peter, Paul, and John the Baptist—who demonstrate that everyone's a champion because of Jesus Christ.

Victory Village is filled with action—music, games, contests, award certificates—things that build excitement and make every child a winner! Over 25 new original songs create a fresh, compelling atmosphere that will capture the young listener's heart.

Students at Victory Village will gain a sense of belonging as well as a true feeling of accomplishment. They'll learn that Jesus is on their "team" and each of them can share in His victory!

Standard is ever-mindful that VBS is often a child's first contact with the Gospel, so every effort is made to bring the child to saving knowledge of Jesus Christ.

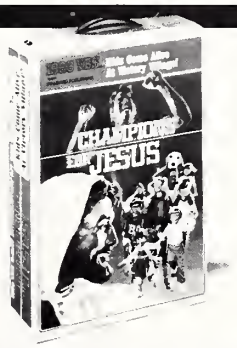
DISCOVER HOW SPECIAL VBS CAN BE! ORDER YOUR INTRODUCTORY KIT, VIDEO/FILMSTRIP AND FREE PLANBOOK TODAY.

It's not too early to begin planning for your Summer VBS session. With that in mind, we are offering three ways for you to become acquainted with "CHAMPIONS FOR JESUS."

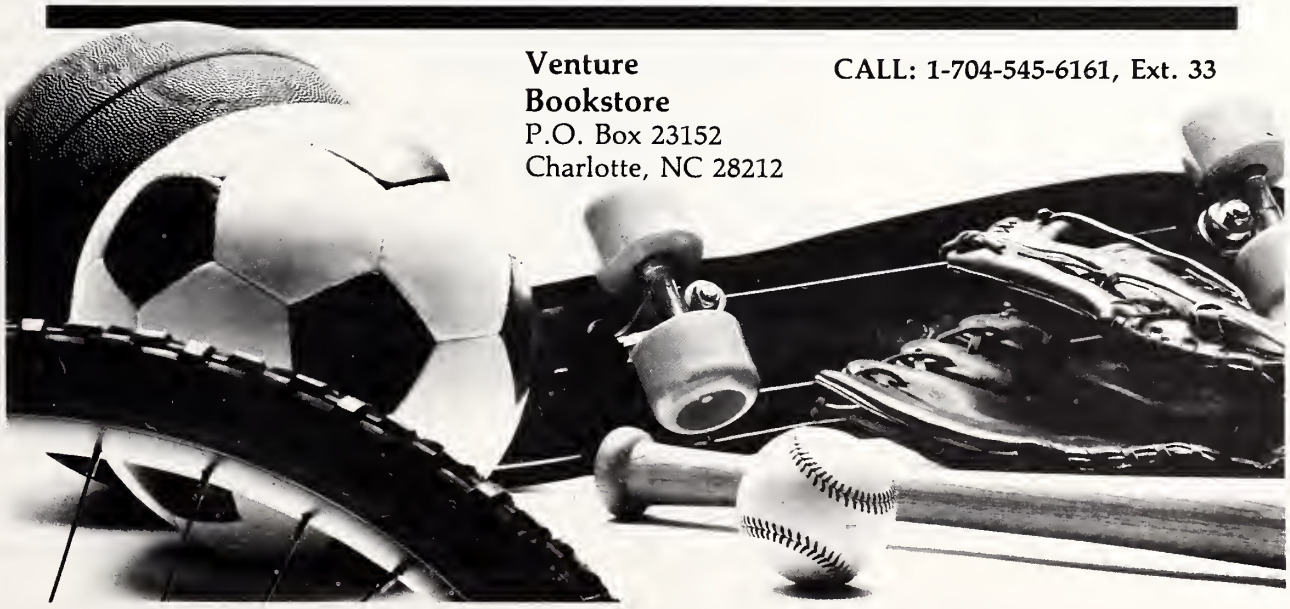
The first is our complete Introductory Kit with sample materials, leader's program guide, including a Planbook, recruiting materials and all other key elements of this action filled course. The Kit for those who want to use the five-day program is #9801, for $19.95, and for those choosing the ten-day program is #9800, for $22.95. Both are returnable for full refund, and the price of either will save you many dollars!

Second, you can *see* the new VBS in action by ordering our information-packed video #9080, or filmstrip #9803, for only $12.95.

The third is a FREE PLANBOOK, a colorful guide to all of the easy-to-teach VBS materials for 1988 available from Standard Publishing.



STANDARD'S VBS MAKES EVERY KID A WINNER!



Venture Bookstore
P.O. Box 23152
Charlotte, NC 28212

CALL: 1-704-545-6161, Ext. 33

An interview with Advent Christian missionaries Austin and Dorothy Warriner

Turning Red Tape into God's Blessing

Austin, when did you meet Christ as your Lord and Savior?

It was at a campmeeting in Nooksack, Washington when I was ten years old. The conference had a ten-day campmeeting with evangelistic services in the evening. During one of those meetings I paid attention, was convicted, and went forward to accept Christ. I was baptized the following Sunday at the campground.

Dorothy, can I ask you the same question?

I don't have a definite time or a specific date that I can put my finger on. I was raised in a Christian home and I particularly remember always going to Sunday school. Then I was baptized. I don't remember making a definite decision, but I do remember that my father was baptized the same Sunday that I was, because he had not been immersed before. I was also ten when I was baptized, and so growing up in a Christian family I feel like I always knew Him. But I know that my commitment to Christ became firm when I was baptized.

Austin, when did you originally sense God's leading you into mission service? What were some of the circumstances surrounding your call?

That was also at Camp Nooksack. I was a youth counselor between my freshman and sophomore years of college. Missionary Ruth Banks brought the needs of India to our attention in talking with the young people. As a counselor I was involved in attending the classes the young people had. What Ruth Banks shared gripped my heart. I had no intention of becoming a minister up until that time although I was active in church. I always wanted to be a full-time Christian, but I had no intention of becoming a vocational Christian worker.

But God spoke to me and I was impressed that the Advent Christian denomination had been given a responsibility for a certain area of India outside of Madras. There were at least 250,000 people there who would not hear the gospel unless Advent Christians were faithful to the responsibility God had given them to continue mission work in that area.

Because the present missionaries were nearing retirement, I felt a personal sense of responsibility. I immediately gave my life to Christ for full-time Christian service as a missionary to India. I returned to Harvard University that fall and changed my major from chemistry to history to prepare for seminary training. I really expected to go to India shortly after graduating from seminary. It didn't turn out that way, because of the visa problem.

Had you met Dorothy at that time?

No, we didn't meet until we were at an InterVarsity Christian Fellowship Summer Camp between our junior and senior years. During my first year at Harvard I didn't know any other Christians on campus. After I decided to become a missionary I met Christians from InterVarsity during registration. I became active with IVCF and they helped encourage me in the Christian faith, and prepare for further service. One reason why I went to Fuller Seminary after graduation was that I met a professor from Fuller at the same summer camp where I met Dorothy.

Dorothy, when you first met

Austin did you have any inclination that God had been calling you to mission service at that time?

I attended this same InterVarsity camp having finished my junior year at Oregon State University. Through InterVarsity, at the University of Oregon and Oregon State, I had grown in my faith. Before we moved from Iowa I was a faithful churchgoer, but after we moved to Oregon I worshipped at a large Baptist church. That church also helped me grow in the Christian faith.

In InterVarsity we were always challenged with full-time Christian service especially through missions. I was interested in full-time Christian service and missions, but I hadn't had a definite call to be a missionary before that. In the Baptist church where I had been, many my age have been and still are missionaries.

Austin, earlier you had mentioned you felt God calling you to India and yet you spent most of your years of mission service in Japan. What happened?

We assumed we would be able to get into India, but the Indian government refused our visa application. I remember going through all the preliminaries. After graduation from seminary we served an interim pastorate at the National City, California, Advent Christian Church while waiting for all the red tape to be taken care of.

We applied for our visas in December. We received no answer until after General Conference that June. We went to General Conference in Charleston, West Virginia 34 years ago expecting that we would soon leave for India. Then the answer came. We were refused the visa just after General Conference.

An Indian national, told us to try again in six months. So we repeated that application for a visa again in December. We received our second rejection three months later.

We waited about two years and applied a third time somewhere around January. This time, the reply came back by return mail, "The necessity of your presence in India has not been established." After three times, we determined that it was impossible for us to go to India. We thought we could stay in America and began receiving calls to some other churches.

But the AAMS Mission Board still wanted us to serve. Neil Braun expressed a need for someone to help start a Bible school in Japan. That planted a seed in our minds. Later that year, we had a call to serve another West Coast Advent Christian Church, and we thought we could say yes to that call. But we had no peace in our hearts until we finally said yes to God and to the mission board about going to Japan. When we said yes to serving in Japan, we experienced the peace of God in our hearts and were positive that this was God's plan for us.

Dorothy, could you tell us about your work and responsibilities as missionaries?

We've spent our entire missionary service in Japan. That's the pattern for most career missionaries. The Toothes were unusual in that they served several mission fields. But especially in Japan where you have to learn a difficult language, it's best to spend your life on one field of service. So we have been in Japan all the time.

Austin and I went primarily to establish a Bible school. Neil Braun and the entire mission team felt we must have our own training institute if we were to conserve our young Japanese people who were preparing for full-time Christian service. They would go to other schools and then not return to work with Advent Christian churches.

Austin was instrumental in starting our Shijonawate Bible Institute, and many have been trained through it. At the same time, we started a church in the Bible school building. That church is strong and is now above average in attendance. Now we are planting another church, so we have essentially been involved in not only the training program, but also in church planting.

Austin, could you tell our readers about the work of the Japan Conference. What goals does the conference have for the coming years?

The Conference has been organized for more than ten years, and they have a good system for overseeing the ministry and helping struggling churches. They want to preserve

Continued on next page

the gains they have already made.

But they also have a deep concern for regular church planting. It used to be that new churches were planted by missionaries, but now the Japanese Advent Christian Conference has a plan for starting a new church every three years. Also, some of the local churches continue to plant a new congregation through an outreach ministry. A local church may begin a cottage meeting and then decide to start a worship service at the new location. That is one church planting another, but the Japan Conference itself now has the goal of planting one new church every three years.

At present there are 20 churches including preaching points that have worship services. Also the conference sponsors seminars for pastors and pastors' wives to help in upgrading their understanding as pastors, and to exchange ideas. It's important to sponsor those training and fellowship times exclusively for pastors and for pastors' wives. Those are things that the mission used to do, but now the Japanese Conference itself is active in sponsoring these.

The Conference just started a work in Akashi City, and it is going very well. One of the pastor's sons Motoichi Masuda has just graduated from a university where he was active in InterVarsity Christian Fellowship. He's evangelistic and is providing leadership for this church planting effort. The Japanese Conference hopes in another three years to start another church in Hiroshima.

A question for both of you. I know as missionaries you have many responsibilities. Your days are filled with things to do. What do you do to keep your devotional life and your relationship with God strong in the midst of those responsibilities?

(Austin) I have always been one to wake up early in the morning. I've been reminded of how important it is to have a time with the Lord and with the Scriptures. For years I have kept a journal of thoughts that come to me as I read the Scriptures and focus on prayer needs.

I try to be up at 5:30 to spend a full hour with the Word and prayer. After breakfast at 7:00, Dorothy and I have devotions together for about 20 to 30 minutes. We have a prayer list for our local church and for the other churches in the Japan Advent Christian Conference, so we maintain that prayer fellowship after breakfast. The prayer guide from the *Advent Christian Witness* (we find that very important) and the *Maranatha* devotional guide have always been helpful in our praying together.

We feel a real relationship with the Advent Christian denomination and are reminded that people are praying for us.

Last fall I heard a lecture by Dr. Larry Lea on the Lord's Prayer as a pattern for prayer, and it has been very helpful for me. I got a tape of that message and listened to it many times. I'm convinced that a stronger relationship with the Lord comes through spending definite time in praising His name, and declaring who He is, and then inviting Him to rule in every aspect of my life and ministry in Japan. I've been greatly blessed in following that pattern of prayer from the Lord's Prayer.

(Dorothy) It has always been easier for Austin to have a consistent private devotional time each morning. I am not such an early riser, but I do know the importance of having a daily time with the Lord. So I attempt to spend at least half-an-hour each day besides the time that we have together.

When our daughters were home we always had devotions in the morning after breakfast. We have been fortunate to have done that, and that has been very meaningful. We do use prayer calendars for that time, and they remind us of the needs of others.

I didn't hear the lecture that Austin referred to concerning the Lord's Prayer as a pattern for prayer, but through the literature that Austin received, I've been helped in my own private prayer time. By following the Lord's Prayer as a pattern I spend more time in personal prayer each day, and this has been a great help just in the last year.

We belong to a prayer group in Osaka with other missionaries from many countries. We go twice each month, and this has been very helpful and encouraging to us.

When you come home on furlough you have a unique set of adjustments that you have to make: different schedule, different food, different climate. While it's good to come back to family and friends you also spend quite a bit of time traveling and in churches. Do you find furlough times helpful to you? Also what are some helpful ways that people can show hospitality to missionaries especially when they are traveling on furlough?

(Dorothy) People often ask us how we adjust when we are in

America or in Japan. I think that we have been very fortunate in that when we are in America we feel quite at home and when we are in Japan we feel quite at home.

It is harder while we are traveling inthe United States and Canada not having our own home to keep up our personal devotions. But we do appreciate being able to worship at different churches and receive inspiration.

Though it is tiring, we do enjoy staying in people's homes as we travel. It would be more restful staying in a motel, but we very much want to meet people, we are blessed by being with them, and perhaps be a blessing to them. What churches can do for us, if it is convenient, is having us stay with people who have an extra room so we don't have to put some of the family out, and an extra bath is a real plus. Also we need a chance to get some exercise and not be overfed. We like simple food.

A final question, as you look at your next five years of service, what goals, what dreams, and what hopes do you have?

(Austin) We have been working on starting a church in Asukano, Nara Perfecture. About twenty members are now in that church, and we are at the stage where I felt led of the Lord to present a vision for expansion. The church needs to buy land and get a church building of their own. We are now praying specifically and asking a man in the community to release some land for us. He has refused twice before, but it still seems like the best location for ministry in this suburban area of greater Osaka.

Continued on page 22

Is God's Judgment a Fairy Tale?

William Batson

Not everyone will be saved from the burning fires of hell on judgment day!

Do I have your attention? That statement has a way of disturbing our comfortable lifestyle. Surely a God of love would not condemn someone to destruction! Or would he?

The Bible is a straightforward book. It announces salvation and forgiveness. It also speaks of condemnation. Jesus said, "Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it," (Matthew 7:13-14). The undeniable truth is that some will be saved, while some will be destroyed in hell. Some will receive forgiveness for their sins, while others will experience the full consequences of their sinful ways. Not everyone is going to be saved. And more will be lost than will be saved.

Do you really believe that? Throngs of people hope I'm wrong. Their view is that we will all wake up someday to find it was a great big theological fairy tale. Though God doesn't like our blasphemy, our adultery, our stealing his money, our desecrating his day, our killing of unborn babies, our drunkeness, and our complete neglect of his Son, he will just give in at the end and say, "Well, that's all right. I understand. You were sincere. Come on, let's all go to heaven anyway!"

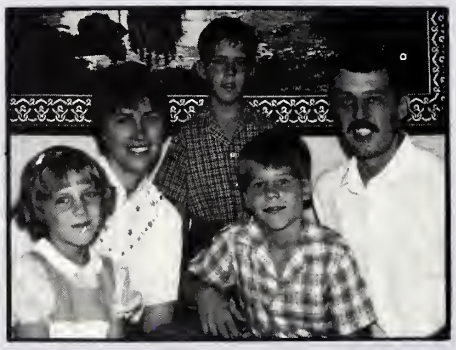
It's a lie. Jesus Christ died on the cross of Calvary to keep us out of hell because some are headed there! If God is going to save everyone from eternal death in spite of their rejection of his Son, Jesus' death was a mockery, a waste, and meaningless.

The truth is that all who trust and obey Jesus as Savior and Lord will be saved. All others will be destroyed in hell. We must rekindle our evangelistic fervor today! Who are the people in your circle of influence who have not yet received life and forgiveness through Jesus Christ? You may be their only channel for learning about forgiveness and new life in Christ. Will you take the time to tell them? □

A graduate of Berkshire Christian College, William Batson is pastor of the Advent Christian Church in Portsmouth, New Hampshire. This article is from the church newsletter.

REACHING
FOR JESU

Harold R. Patterson, Director
Charlotte, N.C.



Frank and Judy Jewett
Philippines

Marion Damon
India

Alice Brown
Philippines

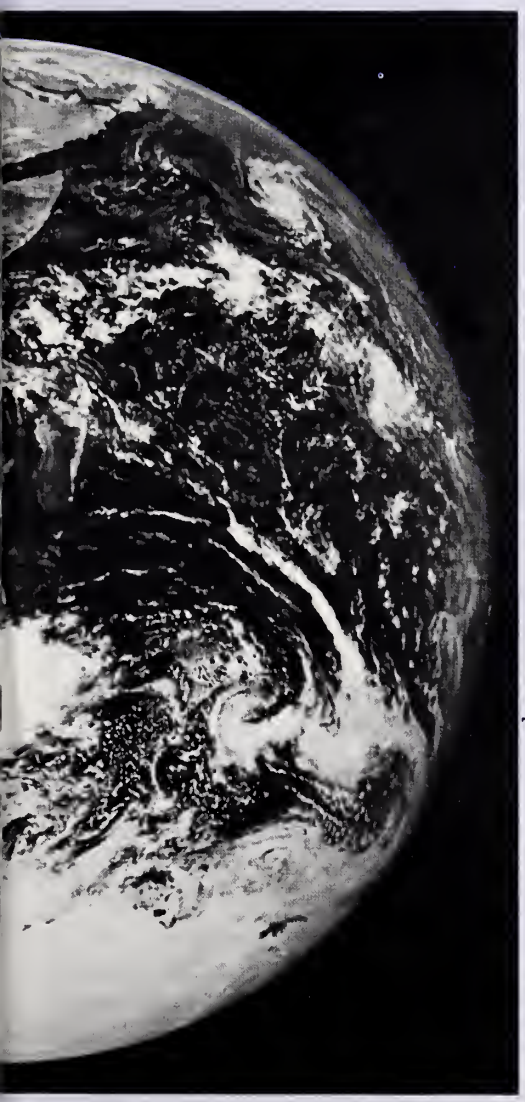
Barbara White
India

Margaret Helms
Philippines

Beryl Joy Hollis
India

ADVENT
WORLD

THE WORLD
S CHRIST



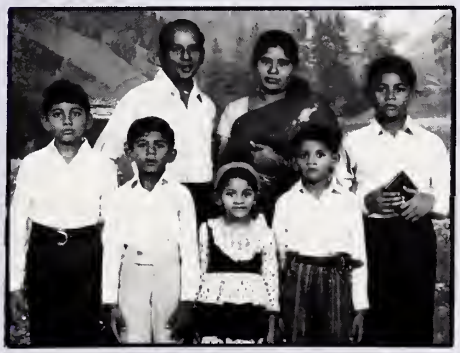
David Vignali
Philippines

Francis and Lyne Ssebikindu
Memphis, Tennessee

Austin and Dorothy Warriner
Japan

Thambusamy and Victoria Devairakkam
Malaysia

Floyd and Musa Powers
Japan



Lucas and Beulah Devasahayam
Malaysia

Ever Perez, Alberto Gomez,
Arturo Angelo, and Abel Garcia-Lara
Mexico

HRISTIAN
IISSIONS

THE PROSPERITY HERESY

Anthony Evans

It is God's will for every Christian to be rich-or so states one of the most devastating doctrines of our time, the prosperity gospel. A uniquely American theology, this "gospel" is promoted by various churches and ministries that have combined the all-American "baseball, hot dogs, apple pie, and Chevrolet" theme with a select group of Bible verses (taken out of context) and interpreted them to say that any poor or sick believer is living outside of God's will. As a result, Christians are overwhelmed with guilt because they do not have "enough faith" for God to bring their ship in, make them well, or cash in the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow.

In reality, prosperity gospel is the story of the dog with a bone who noticed his reflection in a pool of water. Upon seeing a bigger dog with a bigger bone looking back, the little dog snapped to take the bigger bone and dropped his own leaving him with none. So it is with the poor believer who accepts the empty promise of a wealthy religious leader who says fast, pray, believe, and financially support my ministry to receive riches and good health like mine.

Who is vulnerable?

Tragically, it is America's poorer citizens who are most vulnerable to the prosperity scams of some media ministers

who misuse Scripture to tout financial success as God's endorsement upon their ministries. Some prosperity gospelers take a bolder approach to wrest hard earned money from God's people—the threat of divine judgment. These religious leaders 'prophesy' that if the prosperity followers fail to give to the ministry, they will ultimately bear the responsibility for the leader's demise. Still other prosperity profiteers find success in the fraudulent administration of "divine healing" to the desperately ill.

Though all of these tactics are theoretically based on the Bible, this "divine pay for piety" theology is wrong in its interpretation of Scripture. One critically misinterpreted verse is 3 John 2 which states, "Beloved, I wish above all things that you may prosper and be in health even as your soul prospers." Written as a standard "hello" in the Greek culture, this verse has become a major basis for the entire prosperity gospel theological system. That system's proponents have taken the word "prosper," which in original Greek meant "to go well with one," and given it the contemporary meaning" to become wealthy." Thus the verse translates to mean that God's will is for all of His children to have financial wealth and material abundance. The fact remains, however, that many "well" believers are not "well-to-do."

Biblical perspective

A look at Scripture from the prosperity viewpoint would reveal that some of God's choicest and most spiritual servants were actually quite carnal. According to the health and wealth crowd, Paul's need for someone to bring him a cloak that he might keep warm (2 Timothy 4:13) signaled his lack of faith. That Paul knew what it meant to be impoverished (1 Corinthians 4:11) and commanded the Corinthians to be like him (v. 16) would be a spiritual travesty by prosperity standards. But the biblical truth is that Paul, instead of telling his son in the ministry, Timothy, to have more faith and pray for healing, told him to take a little wine for his stomach and frequent ailments (1 Timothy 5:23). The text also states that the poor saints in Macedonia were full of joy while

in deep poverty (2 Corinthians 8:2).

And what of Jesus? The prosperity promoters must mark Him an abysmal failure. The reverse of the prosperity trend, Jesus came down the "ladder of success" during the incarnation, immediately identifying with the poor "wrapped in swaddling (death) clothes" and lying in an animal trough for a cradle (Luke 2:12, 16). More importantly, Jesus' lowly status did not change throughout His earthly life. In Matthew 8:20, Jesus told the scribe that "foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nest; but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head." Also contradictory to prosperity theology, Jesus declared that sickness is not always related to personal sin in the life of an individual or his/her parents but is sometimes assigned to bring glory to God (John 9:1-3).

From a personal viewpoint, prosperity gospel is offensive. As a black American who is committed to the gospel, the inference that my faithful, yet impoverished forefathers were carnal as they toiled in the fields singing the great Negro spirituals is insulting. It is out of that suffering that the black church became a strong institution able to service the many holistic needs of our community. While it is true that American slaves lacked worldly wealth and material goods as their great-grandchildren now experience it, the majority of the offspring live in desperate need of their ancestors' commitment to God, the Bible, and the family.

The same can be said of believers in the third world. Is the Christian in India who must walk three miles one way to worship service living in sin because the economy does not afford him a car or bicycle? Is the African peasant who rejoices in sins forgiven, yet struggles to survive the famine in the land, outside of the will of God? To be sure, God has promised to meet their needs. He has not, however, guaranteed them the material wealth, good health, and stamina of Bill Cosby or Sugar Ray Leonard.

Misusing Scripture

Another interpretation problem that is common among prosperity believers is the misapplication of Scripture. Take for instance Joshua 1:8. Here, God promised Joshua that "you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have success." When properly used with verses 2 and 3, verse 8 is recognized as a specific instruction (from God) to a specific man (Joshua) regard ing a specific promise (to the Israelites through Moses). Rather than finding a prosperity message in these verses, the reader should make the application that any believer who obeys God's Word will receive what God has promised to the Church.

Yet another misused text is Mark 10:29-30. Here Jesus promises a hundred-fold return to those who forsake all for Him. The obvious misinterpretation, which would allow Christians to claim a hundred houses, brothers, sisters, mothers, children, and farms, actually meant that when one gives up the security of home and family for the sake of the Gospel, God replaces them with people of faith who will share their families and resources. When this occurs, the faithful follower of Christ receives a hundred times greater return in family and resources than what he/she let go.

The correct application of Mark 10:29-30 first requires the proper understanding of the word "faith." For the prosperity believer, faith has an intrinsic value, a power of its own apart from its object. Mark 11:23-24, for example, is twisted to mean "have faith in faith" (verse 21). But true biblical faith is only as potent as God, its object, and is only valid when operating within His will (John 5:14-15). In all fairness to God, the believer must accept that God's Word never states that His will includes the promise of material wealth and good health to all people.

Wolf theology in sheep's clothing

In summation, prosperity gospel is a dangerous aberration of the faith. It is "wolf" theology in "sheep's" clothing that must be exposed for what it is—the theology of the American dream. It does not lift up Jesus: it places affluence on the throne. While God does bless His children by meeting physical and financial needs (Phil. 4:19), James 5:13-15), even to the point of abundance (Phil. 4:12), He does not do this for all believers at all times. To teach such a "gospel" does nothing but create a body of guilty, frustrated, competitive, and manipulative

Continued on page 23

WHAT IS THE GOSPEL?

Gordon Isaac

This is a question well worth asking. Its bold simplicity has a way of bypassing the miscellaneous thoughts of our collective church life. The myriad voices of competing interests and the latest church fad recede as this fundamental of the faith is considered. This must be so, as we are brought to a contemplation of the life and message of our Lord. So, "What is the gospel?" At least three things stand out.

The Gospel is Christ-centered

The gospel that Paul preached centered on the person and work of Jesus Christ (cf. Romans 1:1-5, 1 Corinthians 1:23). This is a truth which cannot be taken for granted. Christian preaching is unique because of its historical character. While other religions consist of timeless truths, ethical ideals, and philosophical ideas about God, the Christian faith has its focus on the historical man, Jesus Christ, in whom God is revealed. When Thomas asked the question about knowing the Father, Jesus responded by saying, "If you have seen me, you have seen the Father" (John 14:9).

The gospel is Christ-centered because He is the center and fulfillment of all history. The events of the Old Testament, with their recurring themes of captivity and restoration point to that ultimate act of judgment and deliverance in the death and resurrection of Christ.

Salvation history finds its end and fulfillment in Him. It is concentrated in Jesus Christ. The Old Testament events — Creation, Flood, Exodus, Babylonian exile and return — are gathered up in Him who is the Lord of history.

Not only does history find its end in Him, it also finds its new beginning. The Lamb that dies and lives again is the one who takes the scroll of human destiny (Revelation 5:1-6). All the history between the resurrection and the consummation is in His hands. Christian preaching centers on the person and work of Christ, for it is in Him that all the events of history take their meaning. History apart from Christ is random. History in the light of Christ points to the God who desires to show his mercy.

The Gospel is a finished work

The work that Christ has done on our behalf is finished and complete. In the Christmas story we are told that, "it is He who will save his people from their sins" (Matt.. 1:21). While He lived here on earth, He was set apart for us (John 17:19). He was made a curse for us (Galatians 3:13), and died for us (2 Corinthians 5:14). He was bruised for us and buried for us (Isaiah 53:5; Hebrews 2:14, 15). He arose and ascended to heaven for us (Romans 4:25, John 14:2). He lives for us (Hebrews 7:25). And when He finally comes again, it is for us (John 14:3). He did this alone (Isaiah 63:3),

and finished it fully and completely (Hebrews 1:3). No man or angel can add anything to His finished work (Ecclesiastes 3:14, Galatians 3:15-17).

This means our salvation is sure and certain. Nothing can be added or taken away. The righteousness that God gives is the righteousness of another. Our works do not have any place in figuring our standing with God. Even our religious experience has nothing to do with the certainty of Christ's work on our behalf. Either He rose from the dead or he didn't! And everywhere in Scripture the record is clear: Christ has been raised from the dead and is the firstfruits of those who are asleep (1 Corinthians 15:20).

John Bunyan was bowed down with discouragement as he tried to grapple with the ups and downs of his religious experience. As long as he tied his standing with God to his good experiences and his bad experiences, he had no rest day or night. While he was meditating on the gospel as a finished work, the thought seemed to stay with him, "Your salvation is in heaven." This came as a powerful and liberating truth. He saw that if salvation was in heaven then regardless of his mood or his experience his salvation remained intact and unshaken.

The Gospel is our death and resurrection

It is one thing for salvation to have been won by Christ on the cross. It is something else for people to receive it today. That is why the telling and the retelling of the story is of great importance. The gospel is a living and active word which by its power raises up a community of believers wherever it is preached. The gospel, then, is a word that is most appropriately spoken and not merely written. For when the story is told, the loving intention of the Father comes through to convict of sin and to tell of righteousness.

The gospel of Jesus Christ is first and foremost of the story of His death and resurrection. But there is more. The preaching of Christ effects a change in the hearer. An incredible event takes place. As Martin Luther says, "Faith is a divine work in us which changes us and makes us to be born anew of God (John 1:12-13). It kills the old Adam and makes us different men, in heart and spirit and mind and powers; and it brings with it the Holy Spirit." The gospel first describes the death and resurrection of Christ and then accomplishes the death and resurrection of the hearer.

The apostle Paul sets forward this same truth in the 6th chapter of Romans. There, he claims that we were baptized into the death of Christ. This has taken place so that even as Christ was raised from the dead, so we too might walk in newness of life. Our life is

Continued on page 22

Caroline Michael
Director

Lessons from Moving

Mary Jane Stone

What do you do when your children grow up and move and your house no longer fits your family? You move, right? Well,..., maybe.

My husband had been telling me for several years that we needed to get into a smaller house. It would be easier to heat and maintain, taxes might be lower, and it would be easier to clean. All those logical facts. But I loved the big old house where we lived thirty-four years. It had been perfect when our five kids and their friends were around. It was also ideal when my mother, dad, and sister needed care and moved in with us. But Dad died and Mother is now in a nursing home. Three people don't need an eleven room house.

But I was reluctant — partly apathy, partly thinking of all the stuff we had accumulated — undecided and unwilling. Then we went to visit our oldest daughter and her family in Aurora, Illinois, while they were in the romantic stage of building a new house. In a weak moment, I agreed to sell our house.

God's magnificent answer to my prayer

From this decision I've learned something about trust and God's provision that I would never have experienced if we had not taken the plunge. Naturally, we prayed for direction, but I was amazed at the detail and precision of God's magnificent answer.

For me, part of my reluctance to move was leaving the subtle status symbol of our house, over one hundred years old. It required realigning my thinking to a simpler lifestyle, agreeing I could easily do without many things. When you move to a larger house, you take all your furniture and things fit with space left over. Your self-concept feels good. Isn't a larger house a sign of success, financial achievement, and probably a growing family? But is a smaller house a sign of the reverse? Or is it an indication of simpler needs, having gotten beyond status to choose the essentials?

We went home from Illinois and started cleaning the basement. The "For Sale" sign in the yard didn't seem real. I started looking at everything with the question "What do I need and what can I get rid of?" I started on my multitude of books and took bags of books to our school library. Choices meant priorities, defining myself. What was useful or should be saved because it was beautiful and loved? What was no longer meaningful? The more I got rid of, the better the house looked.

We looked at houses. Many were so-so, some downright yucky. People came and went, looking at our house. Nothing much happened. I was in no hurry; I loved the rambling old house. I hoped it wouldn't sell. In February we made an offer on a house that I thought was too small. It was refused. I felt that was God's answer. In March we found a little red cape, made an offer and it was accepted. This place felt right.

Moving day draws near

Now I started measuring, planning, and packing in earnest. I'd lay awake at night, placing furniture. You think a piece of furniture will fit in a certain area, but will it look right with the other things in the room? You can't know until you actually move in.

People would say, "You'll have to have a yard sale." But I couldn't sell Mom's antique furniture that we'd had for generations at a yard

sale! During this time, our youngest daughter and her husband, Martie and Joel, moved home from Florida. Now there was more stuff in the basement and attic, but I could give family heirlooms to Martie — a perfect solution.

Mid-May. Moving day drew nearer. The pile of boxes grew. We looked stirred up with a spoon. School was also at its most hectic, but I took time off. Then a snag. The house wasn't ready. Eventually this worked out to our advantage as we got the rugs cleaned and down before the movers came. God's timing again.

June fifth — moving day. Joel and Maurice moved boxes in the station wagon and truck while Martie and a friend cleaned the old house and I made decisions at the cape.

A perfect fit

Two large green rugs from the old living room were going to the new downstairs studio. Moving morning Joel and I laid them. Measured for a differently shaped room and now with a pole to fit around, both rugs fit wall-to-wall on three sides and touching the pole. Perfect fit on six edges! An inch in any direction and they would have had to be cut! In fact, they fit better than the room for which they had been measured! In other rooms, rugs fit as perfectly.

As I placed books and furniture, it all fit like a glove. It felt like a jigsaw puzzle as article after article "found where it lived." I recognized God's hand in this choice. I grew to expect their precise fit. When something didn't fit, I gathered that was not the place and looked further.

One thrill I'll never forget is paying cash for the cape. Way to go! We had a contractor extend the garage so our boat could be under cover. The builder made us a darkroom and photography studio in the basement. When we finished repairs, remodeling, and buying "new toys," there was $35 left in that account.

One heirloom couldn't find a place to live for several months. My Dad had made a gros point tapestry nine feet long by six feet wide — a copy of the rug made by Queen Mary of England during World War 2. The tapestry was too tall for any wall. I continued to look for a spot, expecting an answer. One day Martie said to me, "I think from the design that the Queen Mary rug was meant to hang over a banister." Bingo! That was it! Now I knew where it would go—on a bar at the foot of the studio stairs.

People ask me if I miss the old place. I miss the dining room when we have company, but we eat in the studio. We'll have to plant more raspberries to replace the ones we left. We'll miss the fifteen foot Christmas tree in the solar room. But it is a doll house to keep clean. In some ways it is nicer than the old place. It is comfortable and home, private, with woods on two sides. It fits us.

Happiness is more than status or space

Paul says in Philippians 4:11 "...for I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances." (NIV). Happiness is more than status and space. My significance and worth are in Christ — not in things. It is a gift of God to be able to swing with changes gracefully, sorting out priorities and adapting.

Step by step Maurice and I felt God's direction. It reminded me of following road reflectors through a detour in unfamiliar territory at night. All you need is provided as you need it, but not before. You watch the reflectors and take the road one turn at a time. Safety lies in obedience. Blind trust.

To go from an eleven room house to a six room house and have five people and two dogs fit, as well as a photography studio and our own business thrown in — how fortunate can we be! I'm sure God had it planned down to the last square inch. □

Mary Jane Stone is a counselor at Lincoln Middle School. She and husband Maurice are active members of the Portland, Maine Advent Christian Church. She and her daughter have recently set up a photography business that she says is great fun. Mary Jane's hobbies include writing, handwork, and playing cello.

WHFMS Conference Events

Connecticut & Western Massachusetts

President Ann Ball reports an increase of thirty new members and two new societies. They adopted a theme for the year, *Servants for the King*, and are using Acts 1:8 as their verse for the year. Letters from missionaries and one about the new mission work in Mexico were read. Dorothy Sylvester highlighted her devotions using the letters in "missions," and Sue Searles sang a special number. The ladies enjoyed playing "Mission Jeopardy" in the afternoon. Their first conference retreat will be held in Coventry, Connecticut May 21, 1988. The women of the Massachusetts Conference have been invited to join them.

Massachusetts

Ed and Mary Whitford, former missionaries to Mexico and now serving in the pastorate at N. Scituate, Rhode Island Advent Christian Church, presented inspiring messages in word and music. Converts during their mission work are now serving in our new mission ministries in southern California and Mexico. Barbara Schaeffner, President of Eastern Region WHFMS, gave an update on missionaries' needs and answers to prayer. The Missions Committee of the Springfield Advent Christian Church hosted the evening meal to which the whole church was invited. Conference President Nina McGinnes conducted the business and led the group in devotions. The offering of the day was given toward the renovations of the retirement home for missionaries Marion Damon and Barbara White at Plainville Campground.

South Carolina

Linda Hodge, WHFMS President of the Annie McLamb Circle in Bishopville, movingly shared special answers to prayer and God's work in her life resulting in a normal birth of a baby daughter who had been long awaited. After these devotional thoughts, Conference President Barbara Nobles conducted the morning's business. After a delicious luncheon served by the Bishopville ladies, Caroline Michael, Director of Women's Ministries, gave an update on WHFMS nationally and Marian Wrigley, former National WHFMS President, installed the newly elected officers. Caroline Michael gave a slide presentation of her recent trip to Kenya and South Africa titled, "God's Provision and God's Timing."

Eastern North Carolina

A bright, sunny day and a beautiful setting at Camp Dixie greeted the delegates to the ENC WHFMS Conference with Jeanette Johnson presiding. Joan Cole of Charlotte, North Carolina, Appalachian Region Director of Christian Education, shared helpful personal illustrations of God's teaching her through his Word and through her small group Bible study. Director of Women's Ministries Caroline Michael shared greetings from the WHFMS national office and gave a slide presentation highlighting her recent trip to Kenya and South Africa titled, "God's Provision and God's Timing." The women voted to give $300 to the Camp Dixie carpet fund and a committee was appointed to plan their annual retreat. Vice-president Ann Jackson installed the newly elected officers. Janet Jackson, past president of the Mt. Olive WHFMS was elected president of ENC WHFMS. She closed the conference with greetings and challenge for the upcoming year.

A Made Up Mind

Dr. Lillie M. White, a Chicago public school teacher for twenty-nine years, a Bible teacher, and a recognized speaker for women's groups, was featured at the fall retreat for eighty women from Hope Advent Christian Church in Chicago. This weekend retreat was held at the Elmhurst Holiday Inn and included special music and singing, sharing and testimony time, workshops, and messages by Dr. White.

The workshops were scheduled for two time slots with three topics as choices for each time segment. Practical workshops presented were *Intimacy Equals Security* (for singles), *Marriage Takes More Than Love*, *Growing Old Gracefully*, and *Ingredients for a Godly Woman* as well as a workshop on parenting and one on time management. Workshop leaders included: Patricia Barnett, Ruth Carter, Bernice Porter, Carolyn Vessel, and Beverly Yates.

Many women left the retreat with their "minds made up" to do what God desired them to be doing. They were encouraged to commit fifteen to twenty minutes per day for study of God's Word and prayer and to be involved with another women or a small group of women to pray and edify one another.

From the President's Pen

With the coming of spring, we find ourselves looking ahead with anticipation and vitality to the day ahead, leaving behind the bleakness of winter. We begin to experience a newness of life, just as the budding of the maple trees here in New Hampshire signify life springing up anew. As Christian women, we rejoice in that newness of life made possible by our faith in Jesus Christ. All around us are people who have never experienced that life, who are weighed down by problems, doubts, and fears. Who will tell them about Christ who is the answer? It is our responsibility.

As Christ loved us, we need to reach out in love to share that love. If we are excited about Christ, we'll share that excitement! If our faith has meaning, it will be shared—as naturally as we talk about anything else that has meaning for us.

Sharing our faith naturally, that's what evangelism is all about. Why are we so afraid of that? This spring as we think about new life in Christ, let's also think about new beginnings. Let's begin to share in natural ways with those around us about Christ and His love. I challenge you to get involved in evangelism, and bring someone to know Him who is life eternal. We have such a wonderful hope in Christ! If someone had not shared Christ with me, I don't know where I'd be today. How thankful I am that someone cared! 1 Peter 3:15-16 exhorts, "Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect." God bless you all!

In His Love,

Bea Moore
National WHFMS President
Rt. 8, Box 274
Concord, NH 03301

In Memoriam

Gertrude Gibson — by Vernon, VT WHFMS
Clara Spaulding

Pearl Pender — by Elsie Kirby

Funds contributed to the Clarence Kirby Fund

Mission Prayer Partnership

April

19 **Praise** the Lord for the recent baptisms in Mannivaikkam, India.

20 **Praise** the Lord for Bible studies started among businessmen in Ensenada, Mexico.

21 **Praise** the Lord for new churches starting in Nigeria.

22 **Pray** for **Marion Damon** as she teaches a class of eight students in the School of Evangelism that they would be productive in sharing the gospel.

23 **Pray** for **Barbara White** as she assists the School of Evangelism at Kodaikanal.

24 **Pray** for **Beryl Joy Hollis,** that God would bless her as she leads her outreach team in India.

25 **Pray** for **Lucas and Beulah Devasahayam** in their work in Banting, Malaysia.

26 **Pray** for **Thambusamy and Victoria Devairakkam** in their work in Kluang, Malaysia.

27 **Pray** that the Lord would bless all the children of our missionaries and make them a real help in the ministry as well.

28 **Pray** for World Mission Director, **Harold Patterson,** as he prepares for another overseas trip.

29 **Pray** for **Floyd and Musa Powers** as they assist the churches in Japan.

30 **Pray** for **Dorothy and Austin Warriner** as they minister in Asukano.

May

1 **Pray** for the Asukano Church that they would find land to build their church.

2 **Join** with the Japanese Field Council in

Prayer Partnership

believing for **three missionary couples** to come to Japan.

3 **Pray** for our retired missionaries for health, strength and encouragement.

4 **Pray** for Publications Director, **Robert Mayer,** that God would prosper the publishing ministry and give him a special blessing on this his birthday.

5 **Pray** that the Lord would raise up many more missionaries for Advent Christian work this year.

6 **Pray** for the Home Mission works in Pasadena, Calif., Carpentersville, Ill. and Jacksonville, Fla., as they reach out to ethnic groups.

7 **Pray** for **Abel Garcia** as he guides our emerging work in Mexico.

8 **Pray** for our Mexican pastors as they seek to win people for Christ.

9 **Pray** for **Alice Brown** as she enjoys a much needed rest at home.

10 **Pray** for **David Vignali** as he carries on many responsibilities for our mission work in the Philippines.

11 **Pray** for **Frank and Judy Jewett** as they prepare to engage in deputation work.

12 **Pray** for wisdom for **E.A. Akpan** and **E.P. Etuk-Akpan** as they lead the Nigerian work.

13 **Pray** for **Francis and Lynne Ssebikindu** as they minister in Memphis. May Francis have a special blessing on this his birthday.

14 **Pray** for the Advent Christians in China.

15 **Pray** for **Berkshire Christian College** that God would continually guide its future development.

16 **Pray** for the various missionary conferences held in our churches this month.

17 **Pray** for our **regional superintendents** as they encourage our pastors and churches.

18 **Pray** for the Advent Christian radio ministry that many might hear and be saved.

Turning Red Tape into God's Blessing **From page 11**

There are 1,500 homes in one area and another 1,500 being built adjacent to it. We are eager to see the church get some land that will allow it to effectively serve both communities, and to plan for a building that will at the beginning stages seat 200 (which is very large by Japanese standards). We also want to see Japanese pastoral leadership for this congregation. According to the schedule, we will be retiring in 1993 so we would like to see that church well established.

Our goal for this year is 16 baptisms. Two have already taken place. We want eight of those 16 to be men since there are very few men in the church, and we want to see eight men preferably the husbands of Christian wives saved during this year.

Part of my desire is to get the Shijonawate Bible Institute under Japanese leadership with a Japanese pastor serving as head of the school. We are making a start by having classes once a week. This fall we hope to have a course on discipleship meeting for about 2½ hours each Saturday for ten weeks. That is part of our goal to get the Bible school operating on a full-time basis. We have a curriculum set up but have had no applicants for full-time students in the past two years.

(Dorothy) We would challenge Advent Christian churches in the United States and Canada to have a vision for sending young people not only into pastoral ministry, but as missionaries to lands like Japan. Send your best to serve Jesus Christ! We can't say who it's going to be, we can't direct God in that, but He will make it clear. If every American and Canadian Advent Christian church would be willing and have the desire to see some of their people going into full-time Christian work, we would see God do even greater things. We'd love to see one person from every church serving as a foreign missionary. It takes a *big-hearted* church, not a big church, but a big-hearted church, a generous church, to want to send their *best* into Christian service. □

What is the Gospel? From page 17

wrapped in His. We have died with Him and now we live with Him. What is His is ours. What is ours is His. He gives us His righteousness and He takes away our sinfulness. This is a happy exchange where our sin is forgiven, our wickedness is overthrown, and where death itself is defeated.

This is good news! This is the gospel which is Christ-centered, a finished work, and our death and resurrection. □

Gordon Isaac lives in Seattle, Washington. He has served as interim pastor for Advent Christian congregations in Lewiston, Idaho and Arleta, California. This article originally appeared in the regional newsletter of the Western Advent Christian Association.

Polishing our Diamonds

Millie Griswold

Exquisite. Sparkling. Rainbow shafts bounced off the wall as I held it in the sunlight. No zircon here. A real one-carat diamond resting on a golden circle. It slipped easily on to my finger. My hand, unaccustomed to such luxury, looked rough and worn. I inquired of the price, slipped it off my finger and returned it to its velvet resting place.

"May I see the ring in the lower right corner?" I inquired. It too was exquisite, much smaller, fewer facets but nevertheless sparkling. It didn't overpower my hand. In fact, it felt almost comfortable. If I scrimped a bit, put it on layaway, it could be mine.

My fantasy ended abruptly when I remembered two diamonds of the past. Two diamonds I had treasured so much that I lost them — one down the kitchen drain, the other in a summer cottage in New Hampshire. In protecting my diamonds I had lost them. No, Millie, no more diamonds—not even a little one.

Leaving the jewelers, I recalled an article that needed writing. Lunch hour was gone.

The computer cursor blinked impatiently waiting for my touch. As the cursor raced across the screen. I envisioned sparkling small diamonds. Not the real gems, of course, but small churches as diamonds scattered across our world. Small churches, refracting light to the lost world when the Sonlight strikes them.

Strengths of the small church

You see, we are a people of small churches. On a given Sunday, fifty percent of Advent Christian churches have 45 or less in morning worship. These diamond chip churches comprise a high percentage of all U.S. churches. Only one-half of one percent of the 330,000 churches in the U.S. are "super-churches" with over 2,000 members. Small but growing churches will remain a part of our lives. Why?

The small church is tenacious. Like crabgrass, you can't kill it. What do these tough congregations have going for them? Consider these pluses:

- In a big world, the small church remains intimate.
- In a fast world, the small church is steady.
- In an expensive world, the small church remains plain.
- In a complex world, the small church stays simple.
- In a rational world, the small church has feeling.
- In a mobile world, the small church is an anchor.
- In an anonymous world, the small church calls us by name.

Many of these strengths have tremendous appeal to lost, lonely, struggling people. We have good things to share. There are simple skills which can help us to share more effectively. For our own sakes, for the sake of hurting people, for the sake of the Gospel, we must share.

Why grow?

Why must small churches grow? Because the church is constantly changing. If it's not growing, it's stagnating and eventually dying. Small churches don't intend to die. They just don't plan to grow.

Why must small churches grow? Because with today's inflation rate they can't afford full-time pastoral leadership, building upkeep, and the possible taxation that looms on the horizon. The alternative is to permit the pastor to work part-time with the members assuming some pastoral duties. Would your church or pastor's ego be bruised if this were necessary? If so, then growth is necessary just for economic reasons. □

A graduate of Berkshire Christian College and Luther Rice Seminary, Millie Griswold is Director of Christian Education for the Advent Christian General Conference.

The Prosperity Heresy From page 15

believers. At the same time, Christians who have received an abundance of material goods should not be made to feel guilty because of it. Instead, we must channel that energy into a commitment to address the needs of the poor, especially those in the church body, as we demonstrate that the way God meets needs is through His Church. □

A graduate of Dallas Theological Seminary, Anthony Evans is president of the Urban Alternative, P.O. Box 4000, Dallas, Texas 75208.

Your Servants for Christ's Cause

International Missionaries

Philippines

Alice Brown (March 24)
c/o Mrs. Harriet Brown
3 Howe Street
Rochester, NH 03867

Margaret Helms (September 18)
P.O. Box 263
6000 Cebu City
PHILIPPINES

Frank and Judy Jewett
(December 11 and January 29)
Danny Jewett (June 13, 1976)
Timmy Jewett (June 26, 1978)
Letitia Jewett (April 13, 1980)
c/o Frank & Marlena Jewett
Stevenson Road
Kittery, ME 03904

David Vignali (May 10)
P.O. Box 263
6000 Cebu City
PHILIPPINES

Japan

Floyd and Musa Powers
(October 8 and February 28)
Rebecca Powers (Nov. 11, 1971)
4-11-18 Motoyama Kitamachi
Higashinada ku, Kobe shi 658
JAPAN

Austin and Dorothy Warriner
(January 1 and January 18)
3-37 Okayama Higashi
5 Chome, Shijonawate Shi
Osaka Fu 575
JAPAN

India

Marion Damon (March 27)
Box 17, Andivilla
Kodaikanal 624101
INDIA

Beryl Joy Hollis (December 16)
American Advent Mission
Velacheri, Madras 600 042
INDIA

Barbara White (January 14)
Box 17, Andivilla
Kodaikanal 624101
INDIA

On Leave

Bessie Smith (March 27)
Box 657, Waukewan Street
Meredith, NH 03253

National Missionaries

Malaysia

Thambusamy and
Victoria Devairakkam
Sayang Housing Trust
ang, Johor
IA

l Beulah Devasahayam
Cempaka
embira
ting, Selangor
IA

Memphis

Francis and Lyne Ssebikindu
(May 13 and May 8)
Faith Nancy (September 28, 1982)
Ashley Grace (November 21, 1985)
2590 Faxon Avenue
Memphis, TN 38112

Mexico

Abel Garcia-Lara
368 Anita Street, Sp. 62
Chula Vista, CA 92011

Alberto Gomez Ramos
Arturo Angulo Rosas
Ever Perez Morales
c/o Abel Garcia-Lara

Nigeria

E.A. Akpan—Superintendent
Nigerian Advent Christian Mission
P.O. Box 1642, Uyo
Akwa Ibom State
NIGERIA

Advent Christian General Conference
P.O. Box 23152
Charlotte, NC 28212

tterson; World Missions
swold; Christian Education
Michael; Women's Ministries

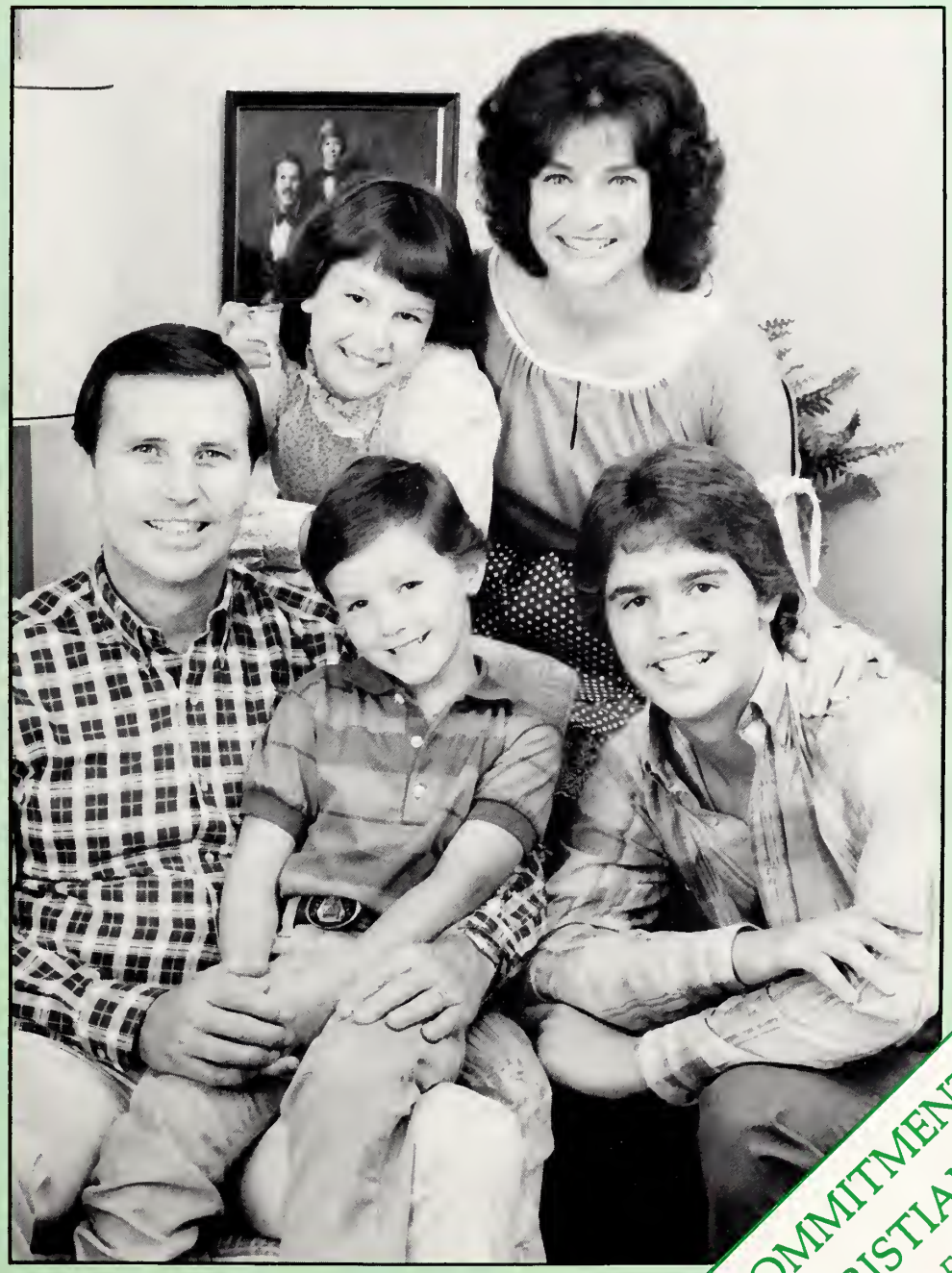
Robert W. Cole; Finance
Robert Mayer; Publications
David Northup; Executive Vice-president

AC04349
University of North Carolina
Serials Dept. Davis Library
080 A
Chapel Hill, NC 27514

C286.7/A24

Advent Christian WITNESS

May 1988



COMMITMENT TO A CHRISTIAN HOME

A Look at Family Life Today

FEATURES

Commitment to a Christian Home 4

Noted Christian author and psychologist James Dobson examines important aspects of a Christian home in this first of a three-part series.

Before You Do Anything Else 8

Noelle Carle, pastor's wife and freelance writer, challenges us to live by the words of Matthew 6:33, "Seek first the kingdom of God."

Expressing Your Marital Commitment 10

Pastor Brent Carpenter focuses our attention on ways we can strengthen our commitment to our spouse.

What's Growing in Your Garden? 12

Pastor David McCarthy explores how we can deal effectively with anger and bitterness and their effects on our lives.

We Can Know God Personally 16

Is a personal relationship with God possible? Yes, answers Clayton Blackstone in this review feature.

DEPARTMENTS

From the Editor 3

Women's Ministries 18

Prayer Partnership 21

Opinion 23

ON THE COVER:

What makes a good Christian marriage? That's the question our writers explore in this issue. Good marriages don't just happen. Healthy relationships between spouses take work and a good dose of marital commitment. *photo by Jim Whitmer Studios*

Volume 36 Number 5

Advent Christian WITNESS

Editor **Robert Mayer**

Contributing Editors **Caroline Michael, Harold Patterson, William Batson, Clayton Blackstone, David McCarthy**

Art Director **Linda Perault**

Typesetting **Susan Gettis**

The **Advent Christian Witness** (ISSN #007-740) is published monthly except for a combined July-August issue by the Advent Christian General Conference of America, 14601 Albemarle Road, P.O. Box 23152, Charlotte, N.C. 28212. Subscription rates in the United States and Canada: One year, $11.00. Single copy: $1.00. Overseas rate: One year, $14.00. Second class postage paid at Charlotte, N.C. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Advent Christian Witness, P.O. Box 23152, Charlotte, N.C. 28212.

As the official publication of the Advent Christian General Conference, the Advent Christian Witness publishes the teachings of the Advent Christian Church and promotes the task of evangelism both in North America and around the world. The views expressed in this magazine are those of the author and may not necessarily reflect those of the editor or the Advent Christian General Conference. Member: Evangelical Press Association.

Copyright © 1988 by the Advent Christian General Conference of America, Inc.

FROM THE EDITOR

THE THREAT TO RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

Want to start an argument? It's easy if you utter these five words: Separation of Church and State. This phrase was first coined by President Thomas Jefferson to describe the relationship between religious institutions and government expressed in the first amendment of the United States Constitution. Jefferson and many of his contemporaries argued that the best way to guarantee religious freedom in the United States is for the government to refrain from favoring one religious group over another or establishing one denomination as the "official" religion of the country.

That understanding was widely accepted until 1947. Before World War 2, the Supreme Court heard few cases relating to the religion clauses of the First Amendment. But in the last 40 years, we've witnessed an explosion of church-state cases at all levels of the American judicial system. Several factors have caused this:

- For the first seventy years of her history, the United States was a small country both in terms of size and population. Most Americans lived in small towns or in the country. The constitution was written for a culturally homogeneous people who shared common moral and ethical values.
- Despite a variety of denominations, most American people and churches before the Civil War were theologicially Protestant. Debate among Americans focused primarily on doctrine and church polity, not on ethics and moral values.
- During the last 100 years, the United States has become a nation of immigrants. With immigration has come religious diversity. Three million Americans now claim to be Moslems. Buddhist and Hindu temples can be found in major American cities. Non-Christian groups find America a fertile territory for evangelism.
- When the constitution was written, government was limited in size and scope. Over the last 200 years government has expanded to the point where it's now involved in programs and services that were originally the domain of church, family, and community.

The writers of the constitution had no grasp of issues like prayer in schools, bias against Christianity in school textbooks, and equal access for Christian students to meet together voluntarily on school grounds. Why? Because there were no public schools when the constitution was written. Education was the domain of family and church. As government has expanded, so has the conflict between church and state.

As this conflict builds, what should concern all Americans is the attempt of some to distort the meaning of church-state separation from the original intentions of Thomas Jefferson and the framers of the constitution. According to Richard Neuhaus, "The separation of church and state has come to mean the separation of religion from government and as government has become ever more expansive, the separation of religion from public life." Organizations like the American Civil Liberties Union, Planned Parenthood, and others seem intent on eliminating religiously based moral and ethical principles from law and public life.

The framers of the constitution had no intention of that happening when they developed the first amendment religion clause. Their intent was a country where

Continued on page 22

Commitment to a Christian HOME

James Dobson

In an effort to draw on the experiences of those who have lived together successfully as husbands and wives, we asked married couples to participate in an informal study. More than six hundred people agreed to speak candidly to the younger generation about the concepts and methods that have worked in their homes. They each wrote comments and recommendations which were carefully analyzed and compared.

The advice they offered is not new, but it certainly represents a great place to begin. In attempting to learn any task, one should start with the *fundamentals*—those initial steps from which everything else will later develop. In this spirit, our panel of six hundred offered three tried and tested, back-to-basics recommendations with which no committed Christian would likely disagree.

Prayer is central

The panel first suggested that newlyweds establish and maintain a *Christ-centered home.* Everything rests on that foundation. If a young husband and wife are deeply committed to Jesus Christ, they enjoy enormous advantages over the family with no spiritual dimension.

A meaningful prayer life is essentail in maintaining a Christ-centered home. Of course, some people use prayer the way they follow their horoscopes, attempting to manipulate an unidentified "higher power" around them. One of my friends teasingly admits that he utters a prayer each morning on the way to work when he passes the donut shop. He knows it is unhealthy to eat the greasy pastries, but he loves them dear-

ly. Therefore, he asks the Lord for permission to indulge himself each day.

He'll say, "If it is your will that I have a donut this morning, let there be a parking space available somewhere as I circle the block." If no spot can be found for his car, he circles the block and prays again.

Shirley and I have taken our prayer life a bit more seriously. In fact, this communication between man and God has been *the* stabilizing factor throughout our twenty-seven years of married life. In good times, in hard times, in moments of anxiety and in periods of praise, we have shared this wonderful privilege of talking directly to our Heavenly Father. What a concept. No appointment is needed to enter into His presence. We don't have to go through His subordinates or bribe His secretaries. He is simply there, whenever we bow before Him. Some of the highlights of my life have occurred in these quiet sessions with the Lord.

Shirley and I covenanted between us to pray for our son and daughter at the close of every day. Not only were we concerned about the risk of an automobile accident, but we were also aware of so many other dangers that lurk out there in a city like Los Angeles. Our part of the world is known for its weirdos, kooks, nuts, ding-a-lings, and fruitcakes. That's one reason we found ourselves on our knees each evening, asking for divine protection for the teenagers whom we love so much.

We haven't prayed for our kids

One night we were particularly tired and collapsed into bed without our benedictory prayer. We were almost asleep before Shirley's voice pierced the night. "Jim," she said. "We haven't prayed for our kids yet today. Don't you think we should talk to the Lord?"

I admit it was very difficult for me to pull my 6'2" frame out of the warm bed that night. Nevertheless, we got on our knees and offered a prayer for our children's safety, placing them in the hands of the Father once more.

"We haven't prayed for our kids yet today. Don't you think we should talk to the Lord?"

Later we learned that Danae and a girlfriend had gone to a fast-food establishment and bought hamburgers and cokes. They drove up the road a few miles and were sitting in the car eating the meal when a city policeman drove by, shining his spotlight in all directions. He was obviously looking for someone, but gradually went past.

In a few minutes, Danae and her friend heard a "clunk" from under the car. They looked at one another nervously and felt another sharp bump. Before they could leave, a man crawled out from under the car and emerged on the passenger side. He was very hairy and looked like he had been on the street for weeks. He also wore strange-looking "John Lennon" glasses down on his nose. The man immediately came over to the door and attempted to open it. Thank God, it was locked. Danae quickly started the car and drove off...no doubt at record speed.

Later, when we checked the timing of this incident, we realized that Shirley and I had been on our knees at the precise moment of danger. Our prayers were answered. Our daughter and her friend were safe!

It is impossible for me to overstate the need for prayer in the fabric of family life. Not simply as a shield against danger, of course. A personal relationship with Jesus Christ is the cornerstone of marriage, giving meaning and purpose to every dimension of living. Being able to bow in prayer as the day begins or ends gives expression to the frustrations and concerns that might not otherwise be ventilated. On the other end of that prayer line is a loving heavenly Father who has promised to hear and answer our petitions. In this day of disintegrating families on every side, we dare not try to make it on our own.

Knowing the Scriptures

Those who have not found a common faith are often left in a vulnerable position. One such lady wrote the following letter to me after her husband had left her:

Dear Dr. Dobson:

My husband recently left me after fifteen years of marriage. We had a great physical, emotional, and intellectual relationship. But something was missing...we had no spiritual bond between us.

Please tell young couples that there will always be a void in their lives together without Christ. A good marriage must have its foundation in Him in order to experience lasting love, peace, and joy.

Since my husband walked out on me, I have tried to rebuild my relationship with God. I am now growing steadily in my walk with the Lord, but I am alone.

Sincerely,

There is a great truth in this sad letter. The couple who depends on Scripture for solutions to the stresses of living has a distinct advantage over the family with no faith. The Bible they love is the world's most incredible text. It was written by thirty-nine authors who spoke three separate languages and lived in a time frame spanning fifteen hundred years. How miraculous is the work of those inspired writers! If two or three individuals today were to witness a bank robbery, they would probably give conflicting accounts of the incident. Human perception is simply that flawed. Yet those thirty-nine contributors to Scripture, most of whom never even met each other, prepared sixty-six separate books that fit together with perfect continuity and symmetry. The entire Old Testament makes a single statement, "Jesus is coming," and the New Testament declares, "Jesus is here!"

"A couple who depends on Scripture for solutions to the stresses of living has a distinct advantage over the family with no faith."

By reading these holy Scriptures, we are given a "window" into the mind of the Father. What an incredible resource! The Creator who began with nothingness and made beautiful mountains and streams and clouds and cuddly little babies has elected to give us the inside story of the family. Marriage and parenthood were *His* ideas, and He tells us in His word how to live together in peace and harmony. Everything from handling money to sexual attitudes is discussed in Scripture, with each prescription bearing the personal endorsement of the King of the Universe. Why would anyone disregard this ultimate resource?

Emphasize Christian values

Finally, the Christian way of life lends stability to marriage because its principles and values naturally produce harmony. When put into action, Christian teaching emphasizes giving to others, self-discipline, obedience to divine commandments, conformity to the laws of man, and love and fidelity between a husband and wife. It is a shield against addictions to alcohol, pornography, gambling, materialism, and other behaviors which could be damaging to the relationship. Is it any wonder that a Christ-centered relationship is the ground floor of a marriage?

Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, that great Soviet dissident once wrote, "If I were called upon to identify briefly the principal trait of the entire twentieth century, here too I would be unable to find anything more precise and pithy than to repeat once again: Men have forgotten God."

Don't let this happen in your home. You probably knelt together and shared a prayer during your wedding ceremony. Return to that source daily for strength and stability. □

Dr. James Dobson is recognized as one of the foremost authorities on marriage and family relationships. This article is excerpted from Love for a Lifetime, *copyright ©1987 by James Dobson. Published by Multnomah Press and used by permission.*

About this article

Commitment to a Christian Home is the first in a series of three articles about Christian marriage by noted family author and counselor Dr. James Dobson. In next month's *Advent Christian Witness*, Dr. Dobson focuses on how committed love enables our marriages to stand firm against the storms of life.

We appreciate Multnomah Press allowing us to excerpt these three articles from Dr. Dobson's newest book, *Love for a Lifetime* and, we encourage you to purchase a copy. You can order a copy from Venture Bookstore; P.O. Box 23152; Charlotte, N.C. 28212; for $13.95 plus postage and handling.

Bring back the joy of teaching Sunday school!

Do your teachers gain a special joy and satisfaction from teaching Sunday school?

Are they assured their class time is worthwhile, their lessons Biblically sound? Do they see students responding to Scripture?

They can! And the right Sunday school curriculum will help—Bible-in-Life curriculum.

Send for free samples, and see how Bible-in-Life can put joy back into teaching. With teaching guidance that's clear and thorough. Effective classroom helps that keep students interested and involved. And of course, solid Bible teaching that draws students to Christ.

Just fill out and mail the coupon below. There's no obligation to buy.

Free Sunday School Curriculum Samples
Check any or all departments below. No obligation to buy.

☐ Nursery ☐ K'grtn.
☐ Primary ☐ Pri.-Jr.
☐ Junior ☐ Jr. High
☐ Sr. High ☐ Adult

Name _____ Position _____

Church Name _____

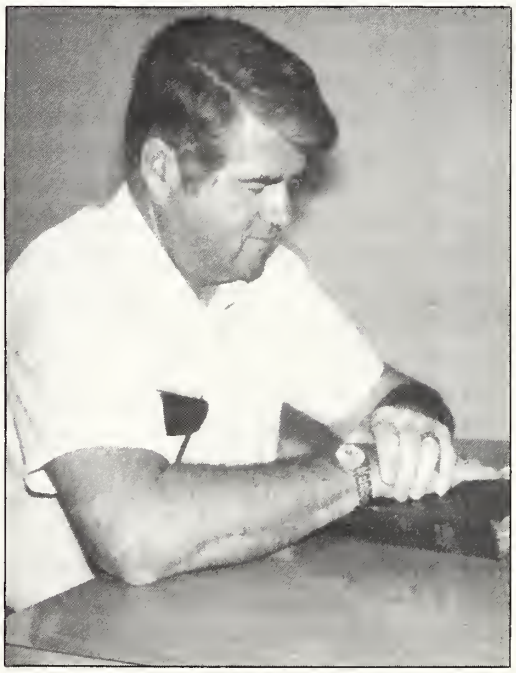
☐ Church
☐ Home Address _____

City/State _____ Zip _____

☐ Church
☐ Home Phone No. _____/_____

DEPARTMENT OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION
ADVENT CHRISTIAN GENERAL CONFERENCE
P.O BOX 23152 CHARLOTTE, NC 28212

BEFORE YOU DO ANYTHING ELSE



Noelle Carle

Matthew writes, "But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well" (Matt. 6:33). How often have you heard this verse? Have you quoted it? Or heard it in song? In this age of easy credit, welfare, and low unemployment, I'm afraid we have lost the meaning of Jesus words. Our parents or grandparents, who lived through the Depression, knew hard times, felt the threat of starvation and did without so many of the things we consider necessities. And they lived by faith. In spite of our present day overabundance and overindulgence, we somehow must also learn to live by faith.

I lived by faith once, and occasionally do so now. We were between churches, suddenly, and had no home, no jobs, and continued car payments, grocery bills, and other sundry and seemingly vast expenses. We prayed, chewed our fingernails and waited. God came through! With a sense of exhilaration we moved into a snug warm camp and prayed and waited some more, this time with our confidence boosted several degrees.

A couple of days later Russell got a job as a carpenter's helper. Many faithful and kind friends gave us money. Our needs were met. Yet our deepest desire was to work in another church. We knew God had the right place planned, but we wanted the answers, then! We prayed and waited (the hardest part) and continued to eat, make payments, all under a warm roof sheltered in a peaceful place. God does provide for His own. Russell's job lasted six weeks; we moved to Rhode Island the week after, to become involved in a church here.

Do our lives focus on Jesus first?

One of the reasons this verse has become so worn is because of our own manipulating it to get what we want. Consider the verse, "Delight thyself in the Lord and He shall give you the desires of your heart." We hurry over the first part and greedily pounce on the second. Oh yes, I desire this new car and a new summer wardrobe. I need a VCR and a new stereo system. Well, Lord?

Wait a minute. What did that say? Delight thyself in the Lord...hmmm. I wonder if we delight ourselves in the Lord as much as in all the things we think we need. Delight involves great pleasure or satisfaction. Is it a chore to have daily devotions, to go to church, or pray? Where is our great pleasure in the Lord? Are we satisfied with Him and Him alone? Nothing else should take precedence over our relationship with Him, if we delight ourselves in Him.

In the same way we neglect the beginning of Matthew 6:33. To seek means to endeavor to obtain or reach. It involves effort on our part.

The word *first* means "before you do anything else." Once my little boy Ryan was delighted to see someone at church. I thought it was me. But he ran right past my outstretched arms into those of our babysitter. I made a joke of it, but deep inside it stung. So also God is waiting with outstretched arms for us to come to Him with our needs. But do we? No, we consult the horoscope or a Ouija board, or have sessions with our psychiatrist instead of going to the Sovereign One who knows our needs even before we have them!

Where are our priorities?

Read Matthew 6:25-33. Jesus spoke about clothing, food and drink; our necessities, not our wants. "These things will be added unto you" refers to what he was previously speaking of. This doesn't include a Cadillac or two, or a million dollar bank account. He's talking about our needs. The problem is that our priorities are distorted. We don't need half the things we think we do.

On whom must the blame be laid? An affluent society which bombards us constantly with commercials and no payments until February? Our parents who worked so hard to make life easy for us? Or our own downright greed?

I'm troubled by my own complacency in this area. Not to the point of asceticism, mind you. But I've got to start taking steps towards a deeper faith in God and less reliance on the things of this earth. Perhaps if we all had a Soviet Christian for a pen pal, we'd see *things* in a different light. □

Noelle Carle is a homemaker and writer living in West Warwick, Rhode Island. Her husband Russell, is pastor of the Riverpoint Advent Christian Church in West Warwick.

Brent Carpenter

Expressing Your

MARITAL COMMITMENT

I consider myself a blessed man. My wife, Glenda and I, have a tremendous marriage. Not only is she my favorite person, I have a commitment to this dear lady that transcends human frailties and weaknesses. We are truly, "one flesh."

Now please, do not misunderstand me. Life in our household has not always been a bed of roses! We have faced some difficult situations in the past seventeen years. But God, in His infinite wisdom had a plan for our future, and our eventual confidence in that design, forged our wedlock into the intimate union it is today.

As our relationship has developed and matured, we have discovered some basic principles of commitment. These distinguishable ingredients have been found in most stable marriages. Unfortunately, as the divorce statistics so aptly verify, many couples have yet to unearth them.

A firm commitment to Biblical principles

The foundation for any successful union involves a firm resolve to Biblical guidelines, and realities. For several years, our marriage vacillated between what we knew should be, and what we could muster in our own strength. It was the discovery of an overt Christian doctrine that changed our lives and our relationship. Seven years ago, after striving within myself for several years to serve Jehovah God through my own abilities and personality, I saw that something was missing. On one particularly disparaging night, I cried out to God in total frustration.

He heard my cry and filled my life with His precious Holy Spirit. It seemed almost like I was reborn. No longer was it I who lived, but Christ who lived in me, and Christ

loved my wife dearly!

Unbeknownst to me, my beloved spouse had already made this all pervading discovery in her life. No longer did we love each other in our own strength, it was now God's love that filled our hearts and minds as we related to one another. It is difficult to describe the monumental difference this made on our lives.

God is now the stabilizing force in our marriage. Certainly, we both continue to experience good days and bad days. Our environment is filled with the everyday stresses and strains common to most pastors' homes. However, there is a contrast because we have a Heavenly Father who is working His will in our hearts and minds. We are free to love each other with that perfecting, agape love of the Lord. We serve a Master who listens, and hears, and speaks to us and through us as we exist in Him.

It's imperative that we appreciate the critical need for commitment to Christ on the part of both marital partners. This is the reason for Paul's exhortation to the Corinthian Christians that they not be unequally yoked with unbelievers. When husband and wife have Christ in common, chances of marital compatibility are excellent. Without Him, the element of most importance is missing and the marriage is at best crippled by a divergence of loyalties. Jesus is emphatically the tie that binds.

A commitment to love Jesus Christ

As we mutually entrust our lives to the eternal one, the spousal bond begins to deepen. We easily comprehend the greatest of all commandments, that we love the Lord our God with all our heart, mind, and soul. However, Jesus goes on to command us to love our neighbor as ourselves. Obviously, our neighbor of closest proximity shares our home and bed. I find it ludicrous to hear Christian couples state unequivocally that they have "fallen out of love."

With God at the center of your marriage, selfishness, hatred, bitterness, and strife become virtual impossibilities. You *cannot* love God and treat your spouse disdainfully. Let me stress that there will be days when marital bliss seems less plausible, in fact the thought of murder may even cross your mind from time to time. The big difference becomes the truth that you are to be governed by committed love, *not* emotion. Commitment based on this foundation will stand the test of time.

In Philippians 2:3 the major component of a finely tuned marriage is explicitly spelled out: "Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves." If all husbands loved their wives as Christ loved the church, (incidentally, he gave His life for it), and if all wives esteemed and respected their husbands above all others, divorce lawyers would become obsolete.

Expressing commitment

In order for commitment to be realized, it must be expressed. There are many little nuances in our day to day struggle for existence that help to depict our devotion. Glenda and I have chosen to take frequent walks together in the evening hours. This period of time is exclusively ours. We hold hands, and put our arms around each other and quite often act like teenagers, but most importantly we talk. Now let me assure you, what we do is not exactly what you would call aerobic exercise, yet it does have an invigorating effect on the heart. My wife can pry herself from the cares of the home and speak to another adult. I on the other hand am free to forget the cares and troubles of the day and unwind with someone who accepts and loves me just as I am.

Such an idea is perhaps not feasible for couples with small children or who live at the North Pole, but there are so many effortless ways to express your commitment. A simple "I love you"; a weekly date; an unexpected love letter; or even a bouquet of flowers; can embellish a loving relationship.

Expressing faithfulness

Perhaps the most important element of communication is the sexual union. A recent book was entitled, "Sex Begins in the Kitchen." I have not read the book, however, the title is certainly true if not intriguing! Couples who do not mesh in the kitchen and the living room will inevitably have difficulties in the bedroom as well. Husbands who plop themselves in front of the television set night after night, emitting a grunt every now and then in response to their wives attempts at communication can hardly expect a sensitive response when seeking intimacy.

Marital infidelity is important! There is a bond between the husband and wife in sexual union that

Continued on page 22

Brent Carpenter is pastor of the Clovis, New Mexico Advent Christian Church.

What's Growing in Your GARDEN?

David S. McCarthy

The Bible sometimes portrays a Christian's life as a garden. For example, Paul speaks of love, patience and self-control as "fruit of the Spirit." However, all gardeners know the importance of weed control. So it isn't surprising that believers must "See to it that no one misses the grace of God and that no bitter root grows up to cause trouble and defile many" (Hebrews 12:15).

The harmful effects of bitterness

Bitterness is a hard, resentful spirit that refuses reconciliation with one responsible for insults, injuries or slights, real or imagined. It's a noxious weed that may afflict even those with a reputation for godliness.

Ray Ortlund, a greatly-loved pastor and author, recalls a time when bitterness crippled his walk with God. Ortlund was a young minister in Tacoma, Washington, proud of his twelve-year-old Oldsmobile. The car was like an extension of his family. One winter morning while driving several young people to a weekend retreat, his car skidded on ice and locked bumpers with a vehicle waiting at a light.

"I was ready to get out and apologize," said Ortlund, "but evidently the other driver was irritated. He angrily took off, dragging my beautiful car several blocks before it bounced loose. I was humiliated." That morning, Ortlund allowed bitterness to take root within and it flourished for years. In his words, "Every time I saw someone who looked like the man who dragged my beautiful car, I had the urge to go up and punch him."

What causes bitterness? A psychologist might trace it to an important need that has gone unfulfilled. Maybe a person wasn't given love and respect that he/she deserved, or perhaps a severe personal loss has occurred. Whatever the reason, bitterness is a threat to guard against. We all suffer annoyances, disappointments, embarrassments and tragedies that have the potential to make us bitter — bitter toward life in general, toward others, even toward God.

And let's not forget that bitterness has a theological angle. Isn't one reason that resentment takes such a firm grip, the fact that it flourishes in our human nature? By nature, we offer the root of bitterness a favorable climate for growth.

Let's examine our subject from two directions:

A warning scripture

"Be careful...there can very easily spring up...a bitter spirit which is not only bad in itself, but can poison the lives of many others" (Hebrews 12:15, *Phillips*).

"Poison!" That is more than a figure of speech. It accurately describes the danger of bitterness allowed to rage unchecked. Think how the poison of bitterness erodes emotional health. Studies show that feelings we don't deal with in constructive ways destroy peace of mind and keep us from enjoying God's best.

Bitterness is also a "poison" in

our relationships with other people. Our text maintains that one noxious root may defile a whole garden plot, and this is borne out in history. God's purposes for a whole church may be held back by one member who surrenders to bitterness.

Sometimes growth poisons relationships in some dramatic ways. In 1986, The *Chicago Tribune* ran a headline, "Dentist Charged With Grudge Bombings." A dentist was in custody for harrassing a man over a period of months. Windows in the victim's home had been shot out a number of times, and twice his house had been damaged by pipe bombs. Remarkably, the dentist and his adversary had been classmates at Northern Illinois University and were involved in a minor traffic accident. There were no injuries and the case seemed harmless at the time, but the dentist nursed a grudge and vowed to make life miserable for the other driver. For 14 years he had been trying to even the score.

That demonstrates one of the dangers of bitterness left alone. It festers within until an opportunity arises to vent some of it. At that point it is discharged with far more explosive power than seems necessary. Dr. Andrew Lester in his book, *Coping With Your Anger*, speaks of this as "storehouse anger." Resentments are pushed inside and we make believe they don't exist. When an event occurs that would require, say 10 kw of angry response, we cut loose with 100 kw. Lester says that the extra 90 kw comes from the storehouse anger, heated and made lethal. What seems to be an uncalled for emotional explosion comes from this build up of festering resentment. It is deadly for our personal relationships.

Finally, bitterness "poisons" one's relationship to God. At some point anger and frustration undealt with becomes sin. It clouds the face of our Father and erects barriers that hold back His love. Without that love we are not able to function as fully and completely as He intends. It is not a coincidence that the same paragraph which mentions bitterness also warns against sexual immorality. Wrong attitudes as well as wrong actions need attention if we are to enjoy God's best.

Bitterness poisons our relationship to God. At some point, anger and frustration undealt with becomes sin. It clouds the face of our Father and erects barriers that hold back his love. Without that love, we are not able to function as fully and completely as he intends.

A winning strategy

Is there a way to handle bitterness, a way that honors God and enables a Christian to find release? I believe there is, and that one may find victory through the following steps.

First, face bitterness honestly. Admit the resentments within and be specific as you confess them to God. Paul Tournier has been quoted as saying, "I have seen individuals come to me and find true freedom as the result of an absolutely concrete confession of their faults. To speak in general terms of our lack of honesty or love is not confession. These are a sort of table of contents whereas it is the book itself that counts, the detailed account of what we have thought, said and done in such and such a circumstance."

Second, surrender the resentment to God. A little girl was hearing a Scotsman play the bagpipes for the first time. After a few minutes she walked up to the man and said, "Sir, if you will let go of the poor thing it will stop screaming." The young lady may have been confused about bagpipes, but she offered powerful insight into the art of living. Resentment within is discordant and detracts from the fullness of life we were meant to experience in Christ. We need to let go of it, release it to the touch of the Master.

Third, forgive the source of bitterness. In some cases this may involve going to that person and saying, "In Christ's name I forgive you." But this may not always be possible. The person we should forgive may not be available. I suggest that you visualize the person who is at the

source of your hurt standing with you before Jesus. As you picture the scene say, "Lord, I am bitter about _____, forgive me. And I forgive _____. Help me to remember this moment when I am tempted to take back the old grudge.

Finally, trust God to heal the unpleasant memories that caused you to become bitter. We need to think often of a word spoken by Joseph in the Old Testament. Terribly abused by his brothers and others who had seemed to befriend him, Joseph declared, "God hath made me to forget" (Genesis 41:51). Only God can erase hurtful memories. It may not happen in an instant, but trust Him to do for you what he did for that Old Testament saint.

A further suggestion: You may want to work through the process outlined here with a trusted friend who can hold you accountable before God.

By the way, whatever happened to Ray Ortlund's bitterness?

Three years after the "bumper-thumper," Ortlund saw another man whose features reminded him of that incident on the icy street. Instinctively, his blood pressure began to rise. Then, in his own words, "God said to me,

Continued on page 22

David McCarthy is the author of eight books and the pastor of the Advent Christian Church in Aurora, Illinois.

Family issues confront Christian leaders

Pastors and church leaders find themselves confronting the same family pressures faced by so many in our society. At their 1988 convention, the National Association of Evangelicals recognized the pressures that church leaders face in their own family lives. The following resolution, passed by NAE, calls pastors and Christian leaders to make their families a priority and address the issues and problems faced by the Christian family today.

Christian Leaders and Family Life

In the decade of the 70s, the National Association of Evangelicals (NAE) made the observation that Christian homes often did not stand in significant contrast to those of the world. Many Christian families were torn by the same conflicts experienced by those who were not united in Christian faith.

Studies done since 1984 by the NAE Task Force on the Family indicate that this situation has not improved but worsened. It is clear that Christian families are being touched by the same destructive forces as families outside the church. This is a condition that calls for action by the Christian community. Family life must be given a renewed priority. Resources needed to heal and strengthen family relationships must be provided.

The NAE Task Force on the Family believes the place to start in the recovery of the Christian family is with Christian leaders and their families. Christian leaders live in highly stressful situations which make it very difficult to meet the emotional needs of their families, including those of their spouses. These stresses are created by unreasonable expectations, the perception of being objects of unsuitable veneration, the feelings of being trapped on a treadmill, relegated to the sidelines or isolated. Often these leaders and their spouses have not developed close friends in whom they can confide and through whom God's love and grace can be mediated when needs arise.

A number of forces contribute to the reluctance of some Christian leaders to address family concerns or take the lead in initiating strong family life programs in their churches or places of leadership.

Some obvious factors are:

- A sense of inadequacy as they view their own families;
- The difficulty of making their own families' legitimate needs primary over the needs of other families;
- The expectation that they be models of an ideal elite instead of seeing themselves as fellow-strugglers in dealing with family pressures.

NAE, therefore, calls on those in Christian leadership to make their own families a matter of priority in ministry. We urge them to become part of a mutual support system. We encourage them, under the Lordship of Christ, to lead their families to emotional health through God's unconditional love.

We call on churches and Christian organizations to provide adequate resources to enable leaders and their spouses to meet the physical, economic, emotional and spiritual needs of their families; to protect their leadership from unreasonable demands on their time, energy and privacy; to be alert to what would thwart an effective ministry to church families and, in turn, weaken their ministries to the families of others.

We call upon all within the evangelical community to pray and work for the recovery of Christian family life, with its spiritual and moral distinctives, as a public witness to the grace of Jesus Christ. □

VBS Can Be The Best Thing In A Kid's Summer!

STANDARD'S "CHAMPIONS FOR JESUS" VBS PROGRAM WILL BRING THEM BACK!

It's tough to compete with all the fun things Summer vacation has to offer. But Standard's new VBS program for 1988 is so innovative, so exciting, so involving, and so relevant to the real needs of today's generation of VBS students, your VBS will be packed to overflowing!

"CHAMPIONS FOR JESUS" will bring back the "dropouts" and bring in new faces you haven't seen before. And a first-time child can lead to first-time families—and church growth as you've never experienced it!

KIDS COME ALIVE AT VICTORY VILLAGE!

"Victory Village" is an imaginary place that becomes very real to kids through Standard's CHAMPIONS FOR JESUS VBS PROGRAM. They'll meet three Bible "coaches"—Peter, Paul, and John the Baptist—who demonstrate that everyone's a champion because of Jesus Christ.

Victory Village is filled with action—music, games, contests, award certificates—things that build excitement and make every child a winner! Over 25 new original songs create a fresh, compelling atmosphere that will capture the young listener's heart.

Students at Victory Village will gain a sense of belonging as well as a true feeling of accomplishment. They'll learn that Jesus is on their "team" and each of them can share in His victory!

Standard is ever-mindful that VBS is often a child's first contact with the Gospel, so every effort is made to bring the child to saving knowledge of Jesus Christ.

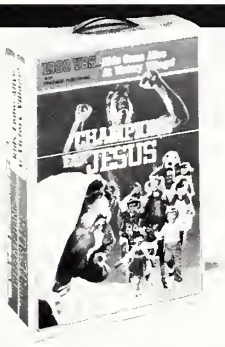
DISCOVER HOW SPECIAL VBS CAN BE! ORDER YOUR INTRODUCTORY KIT, VIDEO/FILMSTRIP AND FREE PLANBOOK TODAY.

It's not too early to begin planning for your Summer VBS session. With that in mind, we are offering three ways for you to become acquainted with "CHAMPIONS FOR JESUS."

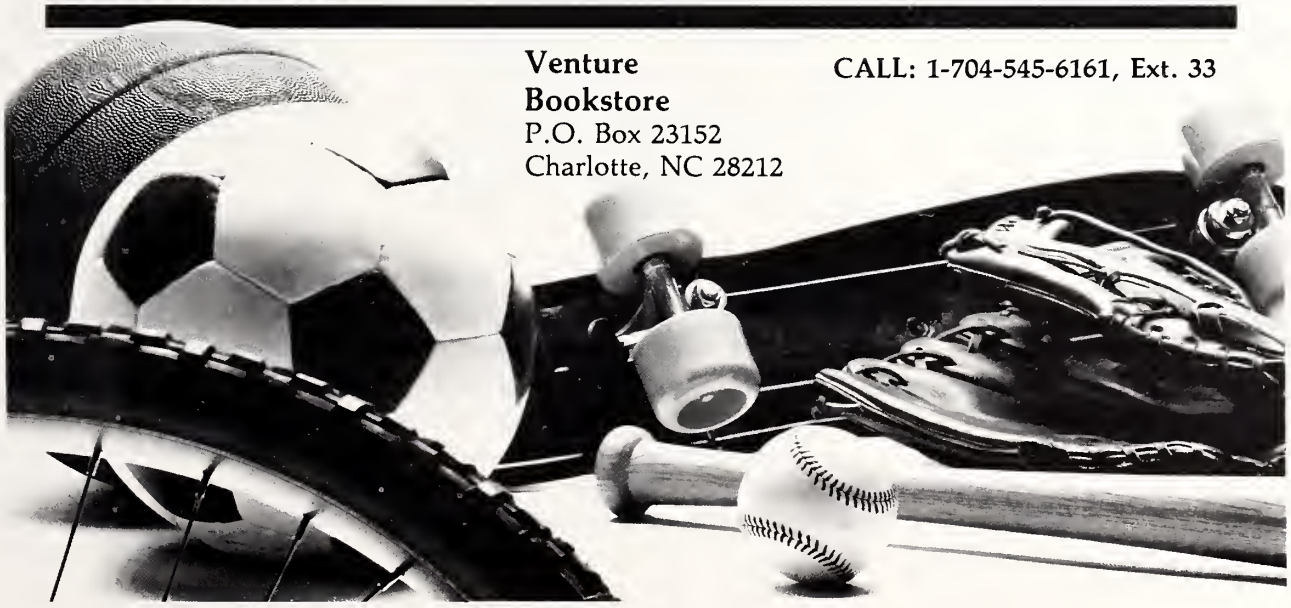
The first is our complete Introductory Kit with sample materials, leader's program guide, including a Planbook, recruiting materials and all other key elements of this action filled course. The Kit for those who want to use the five-day program is #9801, for $19.95, and for those choosing the ten-day program is #9800, for $22.95. Both are returnable for full refund, and the price of either will save you many dollars!

Second, you can *see* the new VBS in action by ordering our information-packed video #9080, or filmstrip #9803, for only $12.95.

The third is a FREE PLANBOOK, a colorful guide to all of the easy-to-teach VBS materials for 1988 available from Standard Publishing.



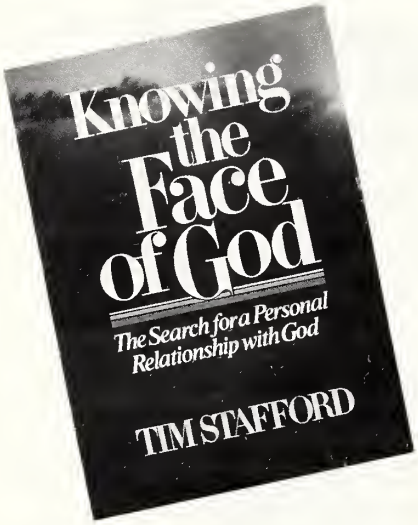
STANDARD'S VBS MAKES EVERY KID A WINNER!



Venture Bookstore
P.O. Box 23152
Charlotte, NC 28212

CALL: 1-704-545-6161, Ext. 33

WE CAN KNOW GOD PERSONALLY



Clayton Blackstone

"The soul that has once been waked, or stung, or uplifted by the desire of God, will inevitably (I think) awake to the fear of losing Him."

Like C.S. Lewis, I have known that sinking feeling in the pit of my stomach. My personal quest for a relationship with God spans the gamut from intellectual pursuit to a hunger for a supernatural experience. At times, I have been immobilized by the feeling that I was missing out on something.

I was (and still am)! But thanks to Tim Stafford's new book *Knowing the Face of God* (Zondervan Press) anticipation now lives where fear flourished.

This volume is no rehash of God's attributes. Unlike other books on knowing God, Stafford plows some new ground. It is a relational approach to our deepest yearning: to experience intimate communion with the Living God.

The great disappointment

We frequently invite people to experience a personal relationship with God, but, as Stafford observes, we fail to deliver the goods. We may fill them full of information, but knowing about God is not the same as knowing him. We also attempt to involve them in activities. In the end, everything we offer is on a human level. The result: "The Great Disappointment."

"We are forced into an uncomfortable double vision. The stories and the promises of the Bible are filled with comfort and encouragement yet they produce pain. What sort of son has never seen his father? What sort of wife has no feeling for her husband's arms? The Bible offers a banquet to fill our hunger yet we lead unfulfilled lives."

This double vision affects different people different ways, but in most cases spiritual vitality dissipates. For those who still care, the quest continues through miracles, spiritual gifts and spirituality. These yield unsatisfying results as well because "in (such) experiences the focus moves from a Godward one to a selfish one...attention turned toward ourselves, toward what is happening within us is subtly but surely different from turning to God himself."

In the end, Stafford concludes, we live with a "not yet" tension in our relationship with God. Even the more direct encounters Old Testament giants experienced still left them hungry for more. Only eternity will answer the emptiness.

"Our practical Christianity has neither a past nor future. It floats in an existential present. What happened in Biblical times is relevant only as it helps us now, while the future kingdom of Christ is a blurry theological detail...People in the New Testament knew that the kingdom had still not come in its fullness. They felt the pain and the longing at its partialness and unfulfillment. They also lived in expectancy and hope, believing that what they wanted was on its way."

"We think of the second coming in terms of cataclysm: war, resurrection, judgment. Paul thought of it in terms of a personal encounter. Early Christians thought of the return of a particular person...The New Testament proclaims the second coming to Christians and with a unique urgency — an urgency of expectation...Our unfulfilled desire has a point: it will motivate us to care about living

more faithfully...We should let ourselves feel more deeply what we miss."

Ways that we develop a relationship with God

Anticipation. It's what I felt on my wedding day. It kept me awake prior to the birth of my children. It teases me as the tantalizing aroma of fresh bread permeates the house. It causes my stomach to churn as I watch my favorite football team in the final minute of a close contest.

And it outweighs the "groaning frustration over the human condition...God will solve this discrepancy in the age to come...our pain and our longing make sure we will never remain content in our current situation. It is to our benefit that we cannot grow comfortable in a city fated for destruction."

With the "not yet" firmly imbedded in our minds, Stafford moves to help us enjoy life with Jesus here and now. He likens the development of our relationship with God to the manner in which we develop a relationship with another individual.

So, for Stafford, God reveals his names only to the people with whom he desires a relationship. Baptism takes on the aura of a public confession of our love for God just as the wedding ceremony is the public proclamation of a couple's shared love. Prayer receives treatment as conversation between friends, not so much to share information and secure requests, but to talk over matters important to both.

Getting together with other members of the Family provides opportunity for us to detect in them a part of the nature of Jesus. Communion is likened to a family sitting down to an unhurried supper as we accept Jesus's invitation to eat with him. Ministry becomes more than service as the author explains that working alongside God aids intimacy.

The touch of God: more than goose bumps and tingling spines, it burns with "the painful fire of pure love. In contact with such love, we can imagine our impurities exploding into smoke and flame until, when the fire dies for lack of fuel, what is left glows like molten gold to match the glow of his divine love."

When we read the Bible, we read stories God tells us himself. "To hear such stories is a privilege of relationship." Praise is when I "take off the mask of the hardened critic and expose myself as an ardent fan and lover."

Deferred gratification is considered fundamental to knowing and being in a healthy relationship. Viewed in this light, our sacrifices are transformed into thank-yous to him. Finally, suffering, which we normally view as villainous, is introduced as playing an important role in our pursuit of intimacy. The pain allows us to experience oneness with Jesus in a deeply personal way.

Eternity begins now

Stafford concludes, "God's purpose in the universe is to establish intimacy with those who love him...He gives himself to anyone who will love to obey him. But he will not show himself to anyone who is not serious.

"There is not substitute for time...it takes time to know people...Eternity begins now!"

Knowing the Face of God is must reading! Advent Christians should exhaust the supplies at the local bookstore. The book's emphasis on the anticipation of the face to face encounter with the living Christ upon his return captures the heartbeat of our originating passion. If we could flesh out the pulse of this work, the revival we so desperately need will burst into a roaring flame.

"We must focus our longing in the right direction. We hunger...we experience God as a living character. He is our Father we long to feel his arms. He has broken down all the barriers to love us; we hunger to be his possession. This hope drives us on...Some satisfaction will come and must not be sneezed at. But ultimate satisfaction is not yet. If anything, our longing is evidence of God's touch in our lives. We long to know him completely because we have come to know him in part. Now that we have begun to know him, nothing will satisfy but the sight of his face. The visions of the old announce good news—God will find us." □

A graduate of Berkshire Christian College, Clayton Blackstone is pastor of the Advent Christian Church of New Hope in Lewiston, Idaho.

Caroline Michael
Director

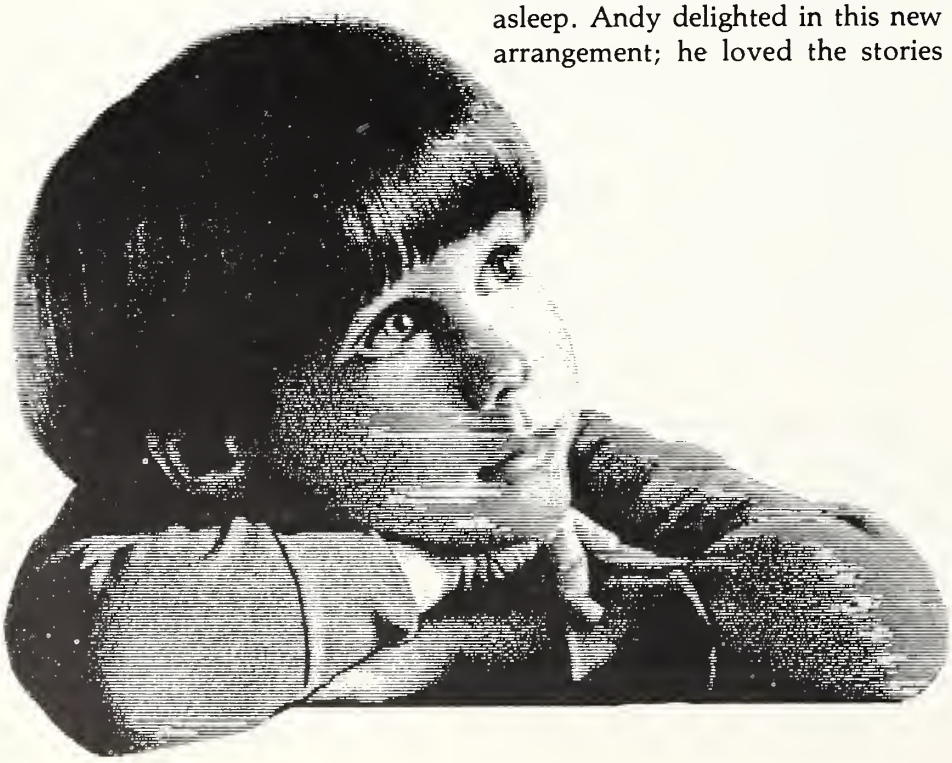
When You Lie Down

Our first pastorate in the Advent Christian denomination began when our adopted son, Andy, from India was an infant. It was while living in the parsonage in rural Oregon that we experienced a struggle many parents have encountered—bedtime hassles—and I learned the true meaning of Deuteronomy 6:6-7.

It all began when Andy demonstrated a newfound skill—crib-vaulting. Before this, he'd always gone to sleep easily, but then he had had no other options. Now he did. For several nights the scenario repeated itself. Deposit Andy in bed. Come downstairs. Begin to relax. Thump, we hear him hit the floor. Go put Andy in bed again. Administer a swat on the diapered area. Come downstairs. Thump. Repeat the process.

We graduated him to a twin bed. "What a big boy you are," we'd tell him. "Now you sleep in a big boy's bed and big boys stay in bed." This worked for several evenings until the novelty wore off. A tape recorder with lullabies playing in his room was our next idea. It's holding power, too, only lasted a few nights.

At last, I decided I'd lie down with him each evening until he fell asleep. Andy delighted in this new arrangement; he loved the stories and songs—so much that sometimes it took an hour to get him to sleep. Oh, for my relaxing evenings again! I shouldn't feel this way, I should be able to give up some relaxation time for the little guy...but I want to unwind after the day's demands...what's really bothering me is that I feel I'm giving in to him.



Maybe we needed to teach him to obey us in this matter. Yet, maybe he really needs me; maybe his early experiences of abandonment at birth and later leaving the familiar orphanage may have created some real insecurities in him.

The right approach?

Unconvinced that I was taking the right approach to our bedtime problems, I continued to feel anxiety about my firmness—or lack of—as a mother. I resented giving up "my time"—until one evening. I lay in Andy's bed watching him make shadow pictures on the wall. When will he ever go to sleep? "Andy, lie still now and I'll sing for you."

I searched my mind for something different, something I hadn't sung lately. "Jesus, Jesus, Jesus, there's just something about that name, Master, Savior, Jesus, like the fragrance after the rain..." I opened my eyes and looked at Andy. He was asleep. What a peaceful, relaxed expression he wore. "That must be wonderful for him," I mused, "to fall asleep with

his last thoughts about Jesus." Suddenly a verse from the Old Testament flashed on the screen of my mind.

"These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up" (Deuteronomy 6:6-7).

Wow! Thank you, God! I know that was an answer from You. I'm teaching Andy about You when I lie down with him at bedtime!

With the illumination of that Scripture came a new freedom to give of myself to Andy at "sleepy-time." Bedtime became our special time. It became our time to clear up any of the day's misunderstandings, to discuss the events of the day, and to communicate on a more intimate level.

One evening after Andy had spent the afternoon at the baby sitter's, he told me as we lay in bed, "Matthew called me stupid."

"He did? Was he mad about something?"

"Yes."

"Well, he doesn't really think you're stupid. He just said that because he was mad."

I was happy that Andy felt able to share his hurts with me and I knew that in the rush of the day's activities he probably would not have talked to me about it. Our special time also became a time for expressing tender feelings. On some occasions I allowed Andy to stay up later than usual so that I could watch a TV program that interested me. Then, feeling sleepy myself, I'd take Andy to bed with me. (Tom, the night owl of the family, would carry him to his room later.) Lying in the dark, Andy would ask for stories (which I produced from my childhood) or we'd just talk. After a little while, I'd say: "Good night, Honey. Mama's going to sleep now."

"Good night, Mama. I love you."

"I love you, too, Sweetheart. I'm so glad God gave you to us."

"Good night."

"Good night."

Andy is six years old now and will go to sleep alone. But most of the time I lie down with him. We need our special time. □

Shelley spent much of her childhood in Alaska and Washington, and met her husband, Tom Warner, through their work with Youth for Christ. They have served in the pastorate at Colton, Oregon and are now at Ashland, Maine. Their son, Andy, was adopted as an infant from India and they are awaiting an Indian baby girl this summer.

Here & There

Bear Point, Nova Scotia

Lillian Sears reports enthusiastically that their Young Women's Group has a freshness and vitality because of the open sharing of concerns and shortcomings as they study about women's needs and responsibilities in their Christian walk. Leader Louise Halliday is using studies by Gladys Seashore. The group plans special outings including an annual barbecue and a Christmas event. One Sunday morning they hosted a breakfast for all WHFM ladies which was good preparation for morning worship.

Attleboro, Massachusetts

WHFM ladies hosted a Sweetheart supper for fifteen senior citizens and that month also collected groceries for their "Caring Connection" family and presented them with a food gift certificate. They planned their week of prayer emphasis for mid-March.

Wilmington, North Carolina

Bessie Foy hosted men and women for a World Day of Prayer celebration. Middle Sound, Castle Hayne, and First Advent Christian churches were represented. Marjorie Denius stimulated the group's thinking with her discussion of three kinds of prayer: petition, communion, and intercession. They experienced a bond of fellowship in singing hymns, in the reading of poetry, and in circles of prayer with each person participating. It was a spiritual uplift for all.

Continued on next page

Nancy Weeks as Harriet Hastings and Carlyle Roberts as Frank Davis

Rochester, New Hampshire

Guest speakers for Sunday evenings including Bryce Whiting, Dr. & Mrs. Joe Iriana, and Ken Farnan accented a missions emphasis month with challenging messages Sunday mornings by former pastor Gary Bailey. The play, "God's Servants: Frank and Susie Davis," was dramatized by Dr. and Mrs. Carlyle Roberts and Nancy Weeks. $334 was raised for Christmas in October Heart of Missions.

Garner, North Carolina

A well supported bazaar raised nearly $4,500! The Bake Shop sold lots of goodies, the Country Store offered everything from handcrafts to turnips, and the kitchen served breakfast, lunch, and dinner. The youth's concession sold Coke and popcorn, Junior Action youth coordinated the sale of craft items, and the Game Room provided entertainment for young children.

Mendota, Illinois

The thirteen WHFM members concentrate on goal achievement at each of their monthly meetings. They raised nearly $1000 last year and contributed to world mission needs and United Ministries as well as other projects. A couple unusual activities were sending evangelistic tracts individually when paying bills and distributing Valentine tracts to nursing home residents.

Beaver Creek, North Carolina

Eight dedicated WHFM women reported an amazing variety of ministries including: an evening's program by missionary Margaret Helms; ministries to senior citizens, sick, and shut-ins by drawing names from the Valentine Tree, Easter Basket, Thanksgiving Turkey, and Angel Tree; complementing the church evangelism program by a TRP presentation on "Everyday Evangelism;" and a Christmas Bazaar/Auction and salad supper raising nearly $800.

Milwaukie, Oregon

The film, *Blessings out of Brokenness*, about the life of Joni Eareckson Tada, caused about thirty women attending a weekend retreat to focus on the questions of suffering and "why me." God never promised we would understand all the "whys," but He gave an all-encompassing promise to help one through the toughest of times, "My grace is sufficient for you." There were times of sharing the love of God, of prayer, and of encouraging one another. The ladies were provided the opportunity to write encouragement notes to one another.

Fun times included craft workshops giving instruction on cake decorating, counted cross stitch, and making country hearts. During a devotional time, Nancy Winslow, Western Region WHFMS President, shared her testimony of God's presence in her life during a period of brokenness. One evening was spent praying together about expressed needs. Linda Thompson, a women's ministry leader of this church, reported how the retreat brought women closer and more appreciative of God's sovereign grace.

Conference Meetings

Southern California

Missionary Anna May Towne presented slides illustrating the work she and Howard have done in the Dansalan College area of the Philippines. The Townes flew back to live in Cagayan in mid-March and will continue their work in agricultural ministries and developing English curriculum, respectively. The Tustin women provided special music and served lunch. Nancy Winslow, Western Region WHFMS President, was the afternoon speaker and installed the officers: President Lillian Koehler, Vice-president Edna Carpenter, Secretary Sue Beardsley, and Treasurer Loretta Shelton.

Piedmont Conference

Director of World Missions Harold Patterson was the featured morning speaker at the Calvary Church in Lenoir and shared exciting facts from his recent

visits to Japan, the Philippines, Mexico, and to the Urbana, Illinois Conference. Conference President Angela Johnson and TRP Anita Earp presented brief overviews of the four TRP workshops to spark interest in the potential available through our Trained Resource Persons.

Director of Women's Ministries Caroline Michael queried "Does Believing in God Really Make a Difference?" in her morning devotional talk, gave an update on women's ministries, and manned a book and resource table. Mozelle Younce effectively orchestrated the installation of: President Angela Johnson, Vice-president Randee Davis, Secretary Patsy Richardson, Treasurer Nancy Lee, auxiliary leaders Wendi Millinor, Sandy Duncan, and Carolyn Purser, and district chairmen Libby Harren and Kathi Baucom. Seventy-five women were present representing sixteen societies.

TRP's Angela Johnson and Anita Earp

Georgia Conference

The ladies of First Advent Christian Church, Augusta, hosted the conference meeting and presented a play, "No Sweeet Odor," and provided handmade door prizes given throughout the day. Pastor Julius Parker inspired the forty-six delegates and visitors with devotional thoughts from Matthew 9. A gift of money was given to outgoing President Janie Ross. Pastor Robert Rathbun from Minton's Chapel installed these officers: President Marjorie Provost, Vice-presidents Adele Carter and Marilyn Hamilton, Secretary Jacqueline Overman, Treasurer Laverne Alford, auxiliary leaders Dorothy Carroll, Nannette Jones, and Mildred Brown.

Mission Prayer Partnership

MAY

19 **Praise** God for this year is the 90th anniversay year for Advent Christian Missions in **Japan.**

20 **Praise** God a baby from the Kodaikanal Church, in **India** was miraculously healed while in the hospital. Her parents had prayed through the night and darkness gave way to His healing light.

21 **Praise** God for the Eliot and Portsmouth Advent Christian churches for these houses of the Lord are caring for the **Jewetts** in a Christian way while they are on home leave.

22 **Praise** God for our sons and daughters who prophesy, our old men and women who dream dreams, and our young men and women who have visions for the future of the **Advent Christian Church.**

23 **Pray** for more involvement of our "baby boom" **Advent Christians** both to be missionaries and in the leadership of the denomination.

24 **Pray** with **Alice Brown** that the building project at Oro Bible College this spring will not go over budget.

25 **Pray** for talented teachers to go to **Japan** and start English Bible Study classes.

26 **Pray** that **American people** will deal wisely when they send money to nationals. Giving your money unwisely will not cause wisdom to exalt you.

27 **Pray** for the people in **Kodaikanal, India,** where there has been an insufficient water supply.

28 **Praise** God that our neighborhing country, **Mexico** has one more Advent Christian worker, **Ezequiel Serrato Sotelo.**

29 **Pray** with **Margaret Helms** as she ponders a move to another part of Cebu City.

30 **Pray** with **Francis Ssebikindu** to receive wisdom from God's word that will enable him to encourage the men in his community to bring their families to church.

31 **Pray** for good weather conditions throughout the **United States and Canada** whereby gardens and crops will grow well.

JUNE

1 The **George Teshera** family asks for your prayers as they visit in the Philippines this summer.

2 Pray for the office staff at the **Advent Christian** denominational offices that the works of their hands may be blessed. May God reward them for their hard work.

3 Continue to trust the Lord to accomplish His purposes in **Malaysia**. Intercede for those in authority there.

4 Pray for the **Nigerians** who receive Advent Christian Hunger Funds. May the land be refined and nourish its people.

5 **This is Pastor Appreciation Day!** Praise God that the good shepherd — Jesus Christ — has set up shepherds to feed His people.

6 Pray for the Lord's leading and timing to provide a young couple to assist the **Warriners** in their ministry in Japan.

7 Pray for **Bessie Smith** who has retired from many years of ministry as an Advent Christian missionary. May she receive a harvest of blessing from her years of labor.

8 Pray for the protection of the Indian missionaries, **Marion Damon, Barbara White,** and **Beryl Joy Hollis.** Pray for the government of that country and for the increase of God's word to its people.

9 **Alice Brown** asks for more prayer warriors to commit themselves to intercession and spiritual warfare for the defeat of the enemy and the victory of the Church.

10 Pray that the church will go forth soon to meet the Bridegroom — Jesus.

11 Pray for the development of **Urban Ministry** in our denomination. Children in our inner cities need the hope of Jesus Christ.

12 Praise God along with **Floyd Powers.** He will be conducting numerous wedding ceremonies. May he witness to the couples words of wisdom as they embark on this important decision in their lives.

13 Pray for the **School of Evangelism in India** that many young people will share Christ's vision for the church in this country.

14 We praise God for the many people who have worked so hard to make **Penny Crusade** a success in their churches.

15 Pray for the Christians in **China.** May those who have escaped tribulation cry aloud God's word for the people.

16 Pray for the staff at **Vernon Home** and **Advent Christian Village** as they assist their friends who live and visit there.

17 Pray for a greater mission awareness and involvement by Advent Christian churches particularly those who are small and isolated.

18 Pray for the national **radio** ministry.

Threat to Religious Freedom **From page 3**

no one religious group or denomination would enjoy privileged status but where all people would be free to practice their faith both in their private and public lives. They also envisioned a country where moral and ethical values based on the Judaeo-Christian tradition would form the foundation for our law and our institutions.

Separation of church and state is crucial to religious liberty in America. But its distortion, by those who seek to rid America of all morals and values that are religiously based, represents a danger to religious freedom and human rights. □

Marital Commitment **Continued from page 11**

is not to be shared with another. When one partner is unfaithful, the bond is broken. The heart may mend, although the scars will remain forever. The marriage may continue, however, irreversible and irreparable damage has often been done. Perhaps this is why the Lord acknowledges adultery as the only valid ground for divorce. The marriage bed must remain undefiled.

Even with unselfish commitment on the part of both spouses, marital happiness takes lots of work. The storms of life will come, and often the pain and tragedy of this life will shake a marriage to its core. But the union that is built upon the solid rock of commitment in Jesus Christ will stand firm and remain intact regardless of the enemies' assault.

This type of harmony is within our reach. We all can be blessed men and women. "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." □

What's Growing in Your Garden **From pg. 14**

'All right, you see what's in your heart, don't you? How long are you going to carry around this garbage you've been tolerating and nurturing in your memory? Why don't you give it to me and let me cleanse you?"

Ortlund followed the steps I've mentioned. He confessed his bad attitude, surrendered the situation and his feelings to God, and granted forgiveness to the man who had wronged him. Then came the healing of those bad memories. "Twenty-five years have passed and I've never wanted to punch anybody who looked like that man." A winning strategy for Ray Ortlund, but what about you?

I believe that God is waiting right now to give you new freshness and vitality in you personally, to your relationships and especially to your walk with the Lord. How is your garden today? Are you ready to dig out a root of bitterness? □

Romance is Not Temporary

William Batson

Boy, did my face turn red! It is not unusual for me to say or do something that is personally embarrassing. But this was the ultimate!

While preaching, I asked how many people had spent their honeymoon in East Longmeadow, New Jersey? To my surprise, Cindy did not raise her hand. In a tone of self-confident assurance I said, "At least one person should have raised her hand." It was then that she burst my bubble. "It was West Long Branch, New Jersey," she announced from her seat. (Didn't the Apostle Paul say something about women being silent in the church?)

Now, it was not enough that I had forgotten the name of the city. The one I remembered was associated with a girl I had dated before meeting Cindy. Need I say more?

Intimacy is not temporary

While I did temporarily forget the location, our honeymoon continues. Who says it should be limited to a few days at the beginning of the marriage? The thrill of a passionate, romantic, and intimate relationship can last a lifetime.

However, if the truth be known, too many married couples have let the romantic flame of the honeymoon diminish. No Christian couple should think that the thrill of marital intimacy is a temporary experience limited to a few days on a honeymoon. I am convinced that God never intended the sexual pleasures of marriage to end.

Chuck Swindoll says, "A fulfilling experience in bed begins with right thinking in the head." That is a frank way of putting it, but he's right. Your honeymoon can last when you have a clear understanding of the biblical principles of marital intimacy.

Marital intimacy was designed by God as a part of his good creation. In his infinite wisdom, our Heavenly Father personally and lovingly created us male and female. He designed us so that we could enjoy to the fullest, in marriage, the complete expression of the sexual dimension. The marriage bed is to be honored and enjoyed by both husband and wife without guilt or restraint.

The expression of marital intimacy was designed by God for personal pleasure, and not just for the enlargement of the family. His desire is that our marriages provide us with exhilarating delights. Proverbs instructs husbands to "rejoice in the wife of your youth. Let her charms and tender embrace satisfy you. Let her love alone fill you with delight" (5:18-19, Living Bible).

The expression of unselfish affection

We should have fun with each other! Some are so serious about "the objective" that they have lost the fun of the relationship. Grins, giggles, and laughter ought to be a part of marital intimacy. Warning: Our pleasure should not be at the expense of our mate.

Marital intimacy is the expression of unselfish affection, not sexual desire (1 Corinthians 7:2-4). Discover what pleases your mate. The Bible teaches that marital intimacy is not just for my satisfaction, but for my mate's satisfaction. Each is to know pleasure and delight in fulfilling the desire of the other. Noted family authority, Dr. James Dobson, says, "Sex can still be exciting and new after 30 or 40 years of marriage, because individuals are still learning how to please one another."

I invite you to try this marriage-building idea. Ask your mate: "What are the three things that communicate love to you?" And then, do something that would truly please your mate. The investment of your time and energy is certain to yield high dividends.

For those who would like to know more about this subject, I suggest you read two books that are classics on marital intimacy. They are *Intended for Pleasure* by Dr. Ed Wheat and *The Act of Marriage* by Tim and Beverly LaHaye.

A growing number of Christians are losing their marriages, their families, and their ministries due to sexual infidelity. One way to "affair proof" your marriage is to make the marriage bed a priority in your life. Exhaustion and fatigue are the great honeymoon killers of our day. Our fast track schedules leave little time and energy to give, share, or receive. Fuel the fires of your honeymoon by saying "NO" to some good things and go to bed early. □

William Batson is pastor of the Portsmouth, New Hampshire Advent Christian Church and founder of "The Family Builders," an organization committed to strengthening family relationships through seminars, family life conferences, tapes, and published writings.

Your Servants for Christ's Cause

International Missionaries

Philippines

Alice Brown (March 24)
c/o Mrs. Harriet Brown
3 Howe Street
Rochester, NH 03867

Margaret Helms (September 18)
P.O. Box 263
6000 Cebu City
PHILIPPINES

Frank and Judy Jewett
(December 11 and January 29)
Danny Jewett (June 13, 1976)
Timmy Jewett (June 26, 1978)
Letitia Jewett (April 13, 1980)
c/o Frank & Marlena Jewett
Stevenson Road
Kittery, ME 03904

David Vignali (May 10)
P.O. Box 263
6000 Cebu City
PHILIPPINES

Japan

Floyd and Musa Powers
(October 8 and February 28)
Rebecca Powers (Nov. 11, 1971)
4-11-18 Motoyama Kitamachi
Higashinada ku, Kobe shi 658
JAPAN

Austin and Dorothy Warriner
(January 1 and January 18)
3-37 Okayama Higashi
5 Chome, Shijonawate Shi
Osaka Fu 575
JAPAN

India

Marion Damon (March 27)
Box 17, Andivilla
Kodaikanal 624101
INDIA

Beryl Joy Hollis (December 16)
American Advent Mission
Velacheri, Madras 600 042
INDIA

Barbara White (January 14)
Box 17, Andivilla
Kodaikanal 624101
INDIA

On Leave

Bessie Smith (March 27)
Box 657, Waukewan Street
Meredith, NH 03253

National Missionaries

Malaysia

Thambusamy and
Victoria Devairakkam
3A, Jalan Sayang Housing Trust
86000 Kluang, Johor
MALAYSIA

Lucas and Beulah Devasahayam
30, Jalan Cempaka
Taman Gembira
4270[illegible] Banting, Selangor
[illegible]YSIA

Memphis

Francis and Lyne Ssebikindu
(May 13 and May 8)
Faith Nancy (September 28, 1982)
Ashley Grace (November 21, 1985)
2590 Faxon Avenue
Memphis, TN 38112

Mexico

Abel Garcia-Lara
368 Anita Street, Sp. 62
Chula Vista, CA 92011

Alberto Gomez
Arturo Angulo
Ever Perez
Ezequiel Serrato
c/o Abel Garcia-Lara

Nigeria

E.A. Akpan—Superintendent
Nigerian Advent Christian Mission
P.O. Box 1642, Uyo
Akwa Ibom State
NIGERIA

Advent Christian General Conference
P.O. Box 23152
Charlotte, NC 28212

'atterson; World Missions
iswold; Christian Education
Michael; Women's Ministries

Robert W. Cole; Finance
Robert Mayer; Publications
David Northup; Executive Vice-president

ACQ4043
University of North Carolina
Serials Dept. Davis Library
080 A
Chapel Hill, NC 27514

C286.7/A24

Advent Christian WITNESS

June 1988

CAMPMEETING HERITAGE

FEATURES

Commitment to Love 4

In the second of a three-part series on Christian family life, Dr. James Dobson explores the importance of love and commitment in enabling families to withstand difficult times and face tough problems.

Campmeeting: A Flock of Witnesses; A River of Memories 8

Mary Jane Stone remembers the many ways God has touched lives at camp and points us to the importance of Christian camping today.

A Special Feeling; A Holy Place 10

White River Campmeeting celebrated its 100th anniversary in 1987. Marjorie Rowe looks at the history of one of the oldest Adventual campmeetings.

Alton Bay Campmeeting Continues Ministry 12

As the Alton Bay Campmeeting Association celebrates 125 years of ministry and service, their focus is on providing a place where people can draw near to God in a beautiful retreat setting.

Leadership Strategies for Husbands and Fathers 14

Roger Schoenhals explores the life of Joseph and provides husbands and fathers with sound, biblical principles for family life.

DEPARTMENTS

From the Editor 3

Review 17

Women's Ministries 18

Prayer Partnership 21

Opinion 23

ON THE COVER:

The grove at the Alton Bay Campmeeting Association in Alton Bay, New Hampshire before the 1945 fire that swept the grounds. Campmeetings played a crucial role in the spread of Advent Christian teachings especially in the early years of the denomination.

photo courtesy of the Alton Bay Campmeeting Association

Volume 36 Number 6

Advent Christian WITNESS

Editor Robert Mayer

Contributing Editors **Caroline Michael, Harold Patterson, William Batson, Clayton Blackstone, David McCarthy**

Art Director **Linda Perault**

Typesetting **Susan Gettis**

The Advent Christian Witness (ISSN #007-740) is published monthly except for a combined July-August issue by the Advent Christian General Conference of America, 14601 Albemarle Road, P.O. Box 23152, Charlotte, N.C. 28212. Subscription rates in the United States and Canada: One year, $11.00. Single copy: $1.00. Overseas rate: One year, $14.00. Second class postage paid at Charlotte, N.C. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Advent Christian Witness, P.O. Box 23152, Charlotte, N.C. 28212.

As the official publication of the Advent Christian General Conference, the Advent Christian Witness publishes the teachings of the Advent Christian Church and promotes the task of evangelism both in North America and around the world. The views expressed in this magazine are those of the author and may not necessarily reflect those of the editor or the Advent Christian General Conference. Member: Evangelical Press Association.

Copyright © 1988 by the Advent Christian General Conference of America, Inc.

FROM THE EDITOR

Are You Ready for Campmeeting?

Campmeeting. What memories does that word bring to your mind? For many Christians, young and old, camp was the place where we first discovered that "God" was more than a word. Camp provided an atmosphere where we could seriously consider the claims of Jesus, develop friendships that would stretch across many miles, and learn to serve Christ in a supportive environment.

Campmeeting was the tool that God used to change the direction of my life. In 1965, at the Santa Cruz Campground, I made my initial commitment to Jesus Christ. That commitment came at a Conference Youth Rally where the speaker brought me face to face with the gospel and its call for repentance and belief.

Several years later, my decision to serve Christ and the church vocationally came while working at the Mt. Hermon Christian Conference Center south of San Francisco. At Mt. Hermon, God called me to invest all of my energies and talents in service to him.

Four benefits of Christian camping

So I'm thankful for the minister of Christian camping because God used both of those camps to reach me with His truth. When I think of camping today, four benefits come to mind:

First, camp can be a place where we can consider the claims of Christ and reflect on our relationship to Him. Countless decisions for Jesus Christ and numerous commitments to Christian service have been made around the altars at campmeetings throughout the United States and Canada. Campmeeting provides a place where we can stand apart from our daily routines, and from the fast pace of modern life. When the clutter of daily life is removed, then God is able to speak to us in fresh, exciting ways.

Christian friendships flourish in a campmeeting atmosphere. We have opportunity to practice Christ's admonition, "People will know you are my disciples if you have love for each other." One valuable lesson I learned at both of the camps mentioned earlier was that Jesus cares much more about the quality of relationships I have with other Christians than about whether or not they agree with me on every point of doctrine or practice.

Third, campmeetings can complement the ministry of the local church. What better way for a congregation to expose young people to the basics of salvation, to specific aspects of the Christian life, or to the joy of

Continued on page 22

Got a Reaction?

Has there been an *Advent Christian Witness* article that struck your attention. Perhaps you liked what the author said. Perhaps you want to take issue with a statement or conclusion. Why not write a letter to the editor. The *Advent Christian Witness* welcomes your letters. We only ask that they be no more than 150 words and that they address issues and not engage in personal attacks. Please include your name and address with your letter so that we can contact you if necessary. We'll publish letters to the editor every three to four issues, and we want to hear from you.

Commitment to LOVE

James Dobson

The second suggestion made by our panel of six hundred "experts" represented yet another back-to-basics concept. It focused on committed love that is braced against the inevitable storms of life. There are very few certainties that touch us all in this mortal existence, but one of the absolutes is that we will experience hardship and stress at some point. Nobody remains unscathed. Life will test each of us severely, if not during younger days, then through the events surrounding our final days. Jesus spoke of this inevitability when He said to His disciples, "In this world ye shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer I have overcome the world" (John 16:33).

Facing tragedy

Dr. Richard Selzer is a surgeon who has written two outstanding books about his beloved patients, *Mortal Lessons* and *Letters To a Young Doctor*. In the first of these texts he describes the experience of "horror" which invades one's life sooner or later. When we're young, he says, we seem to be shielded from it the way the body is protected against bacterial infection. Microscopic organisms are all around us, yet our bodies' defenses effectually hold them at bay...at least for a season.

Likewise, we walk in and through a world of horror each day as though surrounded by an impenetrable membrane of protection. We may even be unaware that distressing possibilities exist during the period of youthful good health.

But then one day the membrane tears without warning, and horror seeps into our lives. Until that moment occurs, it was always someone else's misfortune...another man's tragedy...and not our own. The tearing of the membrane can be devastating, especially for those who do not know the "good

cheer" that Jesus gives in times of tribulation.

Having served on a large medical school faculty for fourteen years, I have watched husbands and wives in the hours when horror began to penetrate the protective membrane. All too commonly, their marital relationships were shattered by the new stresses that invaded their lives. Parents who produced a mentally retarded child, for example, often blamed one another for the tragedy that confronted them. Instead of clinging to each other in love and reassurance, they added to their sorrows by attacking their partners. I do not condemn them for this human failing, but I do pity them for it. A basic ingredient was missing in their relationship which remained unrecognized until the membrane tore. That essential component is called...*commitment*.

Fragile Roman bridges

I heard the late Dr. Francis Schaeffer speak to this issue about ten years ago. He described the bridges that were built in Europe by the Romans in the first and second centuries A.D. They are still standing today, despite the unreinforced brick and mortar with which they were made. Why haven't they collapsed in this modern era of heavy trucks and equipment? They remain intact because they are used for nothing but foot traffic. If an eighteen-wheel semi were driven across the historic structures, they would crumble in a great cloud of dust and debris.

Marriages that lack an iron-willed determination to hang together at all costs are like the fragile Roman bridges. They appear to be secure and may indeed remain upright...until they are put under heavy pressure. That's when the seams split and the foundation crumbles. It appears to me that the majority of young couples today, like some of those competing on "The Newlywed Game," are in that incredibly vulnerable position. Their relationships are constructed of unreinforced mud which will not withstand the weighty trials lying ahead. The determination to survive together is simply not there.

Marriages that lack an iron-willed determination to hang together at all costs are like the fragile Roman bridges. They appear to be secure...until they are put under heavy pressure.

Coping with the little things

In stressing the importance of committed love, however, the panel of six hundred was referring not only to the great tragedies of life but also to the daily frustrations that wear and tear on a relationship. These minor irritants, when accumulated over time, may even be more threatening to a marriage than the catastrophic events that crash into our lives. And yes, Virginia there are times in every good marriage when a husband and wife don't like each other very much. There are occasions when they feel as though they will never love their partners again. Emotions are like that. They flatten out occasionally like an automobile tire with a nail in the tread. Riding on the rim is a pretty bumpy experience for everyone on board.

I attended the fiftieth wedding anniversary for two friends a few years ago and the man made an incredible statement to his guests. He said he and his wife had never had a serious fight or argument in the fifty years since they were married. That was either a lot of baloney or he and his wife had a very boring relationship. Maybe both were true. To the newly married couples reading this I must say: Don't count on having that kind of placid relationship. There *will* be times of conflict and disagreement. There *will* be periods of emotional blandness when you can generate nothing but a yawn for one another. That's life, as they say.

Will your commitment hold steady?

What will you do, then, when unexpected tornadoes blow through your home, or when the doldrums leave your sails sagging and silent? Will you pack it in and go home to Mama? Will you pout and cry and seek ways to

Continued on next page

strike back? Or will your commitment hold you steady? These questions must be addressed *now*, before Satan has an opportunity to put his noose of discouragement around your neck. Set your jaw and clench your fists. Nothing short of death must ever be permitted to come between the two of you. *Nothing!*

This determined attitude is missing from so many marital relationships today. I read of a wedding ceremony in New York a few years ago where the bride and groom each pledged "to stay with you for as long as I shall love you." I doubt if their marriage lasted even to this time. The feeling of love is simply too ephemeral to hold a relationship together for very long. It comes and goes. That's why our panel of six hundred was adamant at this point. They have lived long enough to know that a weak marital commitment will inevitably end in divorce. One writer wrote:

"Marriage is no fairy tale land of enchantment. But you can create an oasis of love in the midst of a harsh and uncaring world by grinding it out and sticking in there."

Another said: "Perfection doesn't exist. You have to approach the first few years of marriage with a learner's permit to work out your incompatibilities. It is a continual effort."

Those views don't sound particularly romantic, do they? But they do carry the wisdom of experience. Two people are not compatible simply because they love each other and are both professing Christians. Many young couples assume that the sunshine and flowers that characterized their courtship will continue for the rest of their lives. No way, Jose. It is naive to expect two unique and strong-willed individuals to mesh together like a couple of machines. Even gears have multiple cogs with rough edges to be honed before they will work in concert.

Marriage is no fairy tale land of enchantment. But you can create an oasis of love in the midst of a harsh and uncaring world by grinding it out and sticking in there.

That honing process usually occurs in the first year or two of marriage. The foundation for all that is to follow is laid in those critical months. What often occurs at this time is a dramatic struggle for power in the relationship. Who will lead? Who will follow? Who will determine how the money is spent? Who will get his or her way in times of disagreement? Everything is up for grabs in the beginning, and the way these early decisions are made will set the stage for the future.

Therein lies the danger. Abraham Lincoln said "A house divided against itself cannot stand." If both partners come into the relationship prepared for battle in those first two years, the foundation will begin to crumble. The apostle Paul gave us the divine perspective on human relationships—not only in marriage but in every dimension of life. He wrote, "Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves" (Philippians 2:3).

That one verse contains more wisdom than most marriage manuals combined. If heeded, it could virtually eliminate divorce from the catalog of human experience. □

Dr. James Dobson is recognized as one of the foremost authorities on marriage and family relationships. This article is excerpted from Love for a Lifetime, *copyright ©1987 by James Dobson. Published by Multnomah Press and used by permission.*

Bring back the joy of teaching Sunday school!

Do your teachers gain a special joy and satisfaction from teaching Sunday school?

Are they assured their class time is worthwhile, their lessons Biblically sound? Do they see students responding to Scripture?

They can! And the right Sunday school curriculum will help—Bible-in-Life curriculum.

Send for free samples, and see how Bible-in-Life can put joy back into teaching. With teaching guidance that's clear and thorough. Effective classroom helps that keep students interested and involved. And of course, solid Bible teaching that draws students to Christ.

Just fill out and mail the coupon below. There's no obligation to buy.

Free Sunday School Curriculum Samples
Check any or all departments below. No obligation to buy.

☐ Nursery ☐ K'grtn.
☐ Primary ☐ Pri.-Jr.
☐ Junior ☐ Jr. High
☐ Sr. High ☐ Adult

Name _____ Position _____

Church Name _____

☐ Church
☐ Home Address _____

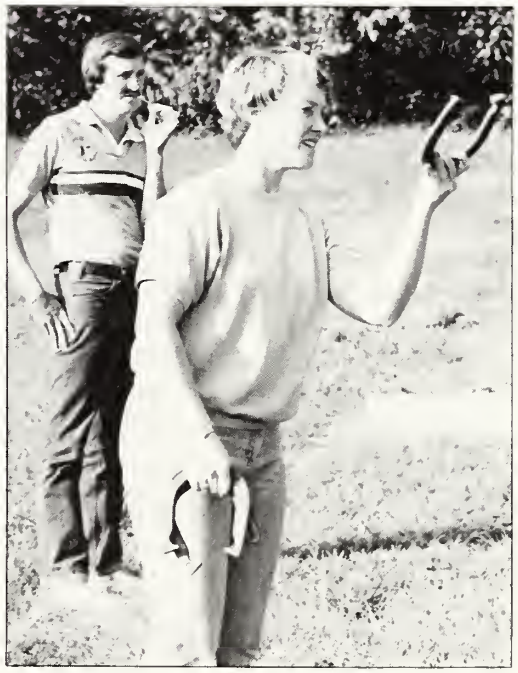
City/State _____ Zip _____

☐ Church
☐ Home Phone No. _____/_____

DEPARTMENT OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION
ADVENT CHRISTIAN GENERAL CONFERENCE
P.O BOX 23152 CHARLOTTE, NC 28212

CAMPMEETING!

A Flock of Witnesses



A River of Memories

Mary Jane Stone

Campmeeting! The word evokes a multitude of memories. It means church services in a rustic setting with friends, great music, inspired preaching, and Bible teaching amid laughter and fellowship. While waiting in line for meals, served cafeteria style, we catch up on the year's events with people, some of whom we may only see that particular week.

A place to sense God's presence

Every campmeeting has peak experiences that catch in the memory. God teaches, reshapes lives, calls wanderers to Himself. This week takes on increased importance as our lives seem to speed faster and faster. Reflective time is scarce. Campmeeting gives us this time.

How many pastors and missionaries mark their serious call to full-time service from a peak experience at a campmeeting? How many adult workers in our churches draw on their teaching and experiences at youth camp? Campmeeting enriches our lives.

Many people take their vacation so they can attend. That use of scarce vacation time testifies to the importance of a week dedicated to the study of God's Word. Other people make a big effort to "come back for campmeeting," if only for a day or two. This week becomes family reunion times and "cousin frolics."

A place where lives are changed

Campmeeting also means chattering girls moving mountains of clothing and gear into cabins while scanning the choice of boys expectantly. Choruses, campfires, swimming, and services meld into a week of memories. Special spots, like the old rock or the cabin are remembered years afterwards. Lives are changed and molded, truths taught and caught. Counselors pray with and guide young people as questions are explored and answers sought.

Youth camp is a safe place for young people to practice social skills in a Christian atmosphere. There are few "safe" settings these days for young people to learn social skills. Making friends, sharing, listening and camp romances are important to our teens.

A place to serve

Campmeeting also means troops of workers dedicating hundreds of man-hours of work and lots of money. Constructing and

repairing buildings, replacing plumbing, cooking meals, working on lessons and sermons—planning, praying, sweating. I know five generations of my family and friends that have toiled, prayed, and tithed to keep our campmeeting going eighty-five years. You know a similar group of dedicated Christians that have done the same for other campmeetings. Any institution that survives eighty or one hundred years demands that kind of dedication.

My campmeeting is Big Lake at Princeton, Maine founded by my grandfather, Rev. Benjamin W. Corliss in 1903. Old photographs show that Big Lake looks as beautiful as ever. Fashions and styles change — tents become camps; wagons and model T's grow into campers and cars — but the feeling of community remains. People grow old, saints fall asleep in Jesus, and leadership passes to younger saints. Children, nurtured in youth camp, grow up to take adult responsibilities and their children move into the youth cabins. Generations pass like a river and memories are perpetuated.

While on the grounds, we are awash with memories. We reminisce about the "old timers," funny happenings, memories of great outpouring of God's Spirit. Reminders of the dedication of former workers, like fingerprints, are the buildings and tools we use to extend God's love to new generations. Their encouragement and spirit seems to hover on the grounds.

We all spend our lives a day at a time. Invest where your energy, money, and talents will multiply. Enrich your life and your family's well being. Go to campmeeting this summer — and take your children and grandchildren with you. □

Mary Jane Stone is a counselor at Lincoln Middle School. She and husband Maurice are active members of the Portland, Maine Advent Christian Church. She and her daughter have recently set up a photography business that she says is great fun. Mary Jane's hobbies include writing, handwork, and playing cello.

A Special FEELING *A Holy* PLACE

Marjorie Rowe

"Campmeetin's tonight!" Those words mean nothing, perhaps, to a young urban professional of 1988. In an era when a family night might consist of piling the kids into the BMW and going out for sushi, isn't the idea of attending an old-fashioned gospel campmeeting a little, well archaic?

1987 marked the centennial season of the White River Camp Meeting in White River Junction, Vermont. Today families travel to the campgrounds in vans and RVs instead of by train or horse and buggy. Little else has changed, however. Therein lies the charm, and more significantly the enduring value of one of America's most cherished religious traditions.

Scores of New Englanders over the past century have found a second home at White River Camp Meeting. Known officially as the Advent Christian Church and Conference Center, the camp was incorporated in September 1887.

The history of Advent Christian campmeetings dates back to 1842, when the first American campmeeting was held in East Kingston, New Hampshire. Between 7,000 and 10,000 people gathered for a week of spiritual teaching and fellowship. The distinguished poet John Greenleaf Whittier was among those present. He was sufficiently impressed by the meetings to reflect upon them in his writings.

Beginnings

In June 1887 a group of men met beside a hemlock log on a peaceful plateau above the Connecticut River. White River Junction lay less than a mile to the south, and they determined this to be the ideal site for an Advent Christian campground. They were successful in purchasing the desired parcel of land for under $1,000.

The six founding members each paid $10 a share to join the new White River Junction Adventist Campmeeting Association. This money was used to erect several buildings and to secure a cloth tent.

The following August a week of meetings was held on the grounds. Despite a disastrous fire which swept through the camp in 1895, destroying numerous trees, seats, and cottages, an encampment was held each year until 1917. That year the Spanish-American influenza reached epidemic proportions, and quarantine for polio was also in effect. Americans avoided public gathering places and the campground was silent.

Over the past century general interest in attending campmeeting has fluctuated. There have been years when all the accommodations at cottages and campsites at White River were full. A few summers, interest seemed to have greatly waned. But one factor that has remained constant is the unique aura of Old White River Campground. Comments Roberta Butterfield, wife of the association's current treasurer: "There has always been the special feeling of being in a holy place which has called members and visitors back for another encampment."

A special feeling

One member, in fact, chose never to leave the grounds. Ben Butterfield relates the tale of old Ozzie Wyman, for many years the caretaker of the camp. "White River came to define Ozzie in life, and he asked not to leave the place in death. His grave is marked by a small stone out back."

If any one person can be said to typify White River, however, it is President Emeritus George Stone. After serving as president of the association for over 35 years, "he was the camp," explains Butterfield. "He opened the camp alone many times. He did battle with the old sheet metal woodstove, decorated the tabernacle, cleaned toilets and baked pies."

While tempting to claim that White River has a particular ambience, that is too pretentious a word for the campground. "It's not an especially beautiful place," admits Mrs. Butterfield. "The same cottages are standing now that were first erected 100 years ago."

"The builders used no studs," adds her husband, "just 3x4s held

together with vertical boarding. No one expected them to last. Being Adventists, I guess we expected the Lord to come before they'd fall down!"

The original buildings now sport paint and Mr. Edison's marvel, electricity. They include a boarding house, lodging house, dorms for young people, a tabernacle, and a small open shelter with a baptismal tank. Formerly converts would be taken to the nearby Connecticut River to affirm their new-found faith.

Those attending campmeeting are offered a full schedule of events. There are morning and evening "prayer bands," sharing times (called Love Feasts), Bible studies, recreational activities for the teens and younger children, and a worship service or two.

One century forward in Jesus

Evangelist Harold Crocker and Bible teacher Earl Waterman ministered at White River during last year's centennial season, but many other established clergymen have served over the years.

The motto of White River Camp Meeting is "One Century Forward in Jesus." In these days of soaring glass churches and mega-dollar television ministries, there remains a humble little camp in eastern Vermont devoted, simply, to telling the good news of Jesus Christ. Concludes Roberta Butterfield, "It is nice to know that there is a place that doesn't change so much—or so fast." □

Marjorie Wallem Rowe teaches speech at Daniel Webster College in Nashua, New Hampshire and is a member of Trinity Baptist Church, where her husband is minister to youth.

The Glorious Resurrection Hope

Beulah Bowden fell to sleep in Christ March 31, 1988 at the age of 104. She was the granddaughter of William Sheldon who was a preacher-evangelist in the early days of the Advent Christian Church. Three of her brothers, William Sheldon, Ralph, and Miles, served as ministers. Her nephew-in-law, Rev. Joe Tom Tate, served as President of the Advent Christian Church for 17 years and a grandnephew, Barry Joe Tate, is an Advent Christian minister as is Harold Paxton, the husband of a grandniece. It was Beulah's expressed desire that her death be used as an occasion to "preach" the glorious resurrection hope and the only way of salvation. She wrote her personal testimony to this end which is given here in her memory and by her request.

The Testimony of Beulah May Bowden

I was born at Brodhead, Wisconsin on July 20, 1883, the daughter of Lewis Alfred and Jennie Sheldon Bowden. On August 23, 1895 the Lord opened my heart to realize my need of a redeemer. I accepted Christ Jesus, not only as Savior, but also as Lord of my life.

Now, as I face the sleep of death, I am not terrified. As a child, I used to awaken with surprise to a bright sunny morning. I had closed my eyes at night, and in less than a second, seemingly, had opened them to find it morning.

In just the same way, when I fall asleep in death I expect to awake, seemingly the next moment, to the sound of a triumphant "shout," the "trump of God," the "voice of the archangel." And I shall behold the open graves and the descending Lord (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18). With the redeemed of the ages I shall rise to meet my Lord in the air and enter Isaiah's chambers, while God cleanses this planet and brings down his glorious city from heaven onto a renewed earth which is to be my home (Isaiah 26:20, 21; Revelation 21:1-4). And I shall know no more pain, sorrow, nor death throughout a joyous eternity (Revelation 21:4; 22:3,5).

I know the skeptics say the dead could not be brought to life after part of the body has been built into a nearby tree and part swept down the river into the ocean. I also know that scientists tell us that there is not a cell in our body that was there seven years ago. Yet I distinctly remember things that took place not only seven years ago but over ninety years ago. Surely the God who recorded all our members in His book "when as yet there were none of them" (Psalms 139:15,16) knows how to rebuild our bodies and to fashion them "like unto His glorious body" (Philippians 3:20,21).

This is the blessed hope that has sustained me when I have stood by the caskets of my Christian loved ones. And you, my dear friends, do not grieve for me, but accept the Lamb of God whose blood atones for our sins (John 1:29), receive Jesus as your Savior that you may become children of God and "heirs of God" (John 1:12; Romans 8:17,18) "who has prepared for them things more wonderful than it is possible for the human mind to conceive" (1 Corinthians 2:9). □

ALTON BAY CAMPMEETING CONTINUES MINISTRY

David Bohy

This summer marks the 125th year of continuing ministry at the Alton Bay, New Hampshire conference center. Located on the shore of beautiful Lake Winnipeasaukee, Alton Bay Campground has been a place for Christian growth, fellowship, and recreation for thousands of families and church groups.

The Alton Bay Campmeeting Association was founded in 1863 by three Advent Christian elders: James G. Smith, Zachariah Boody, and Charles H. Willey. The first meeting was announced August 4, 1863 in the *World's Crisis*, the predecessor to the *Advent Christian Witness:*

New Hampshire Campmeeting
"Providence permitting, there will be a campmeeting at Alton Bay, New Hampshire to commence September 7 and hold over the following Sunday. Come, ye servants of the living God to the New Hampshire campmeeting, to feed the flock of Jesus Christ and save souls from the 'second death.' Further particulars herewith."

—For the brethren, J.G. Smith

Many responded to that first invitation. The congregation averaged 1500 daily with five to six thousand on the grounds on the final Sunday. The land was initially leased from the Boston & Maine Railroad.

The railroad had been extended from Dover to Alton Bay twelve years earlier. They offered half fare for campmeeting attendees who came by train from areas throughout New England. Lake Winnipesaukee steamboats and numerous horse-drawn wagons brought hundreds more.

Conditions were crude by modern standards — tents, straw-filled ticking for sleeping, kerosene lanterns. Preaching services were conducted outdoors with primitive wooden benches for those who chose to sit.

By all accounts, the meeting was a great success. The preaching was good, while the singing and prayer meetings were described as excellent. The soon return of Christ was the central theme. Brother H.L. Hasting preached the first evening's sermon on the text, "while we wait for the blessed hope — the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ," from Titus 2:13. He spoke the final Sunday on being "children of the resurrection" from Luke 20:36. Local businessmen and community leaders were helpful and supportive as well.

The arrangements committee agreed to have campmeeting at the same location the following

The Alton Bay Campmeeting in 1865.

COURTESY OF THE ALTON BAY CAMPMEETING ASSOCIATION

year. Alton Bay thereby joined the scores of Advent Christian campmeetings conducted throughout New England.

The following year, 10,000 people attended on the last Sunday. Cottages were constructed and wooden floors were built for some of the tents. The cottages were simple wood frame buildings — intially unpainted. With the Lord's return being imminent, it was considered a waste of time and money to paint the buildings.

COURTESY OF THE ALTON BAY CAMPMEETING ASSOCIATION

People by the pump at the Alton Bay Campground. This picture was taken during the late 1800s.

The campmeeting grows

By 1866 there were forty wooden cottages, most of them in a circle around the grove, and seventy-seven tents. A large wooden tabernacle and three smaller "chapels" later provided indoor places for worship but the large outdoor seated-grove area and preaching stand remained the focal point for major services.

From 1866-1880 there were always at least 20,000 worshippers present by the final Sunday of campmeeting. But the 1872 meeting was the largest ever. *The Boston Journal* estimated 50,000; others said 35,000. It was reported that 6,500 came on trains, 4,000 on the steamboats Mount Washington and Lady of the Lake, and 1,115 teams of horses helped bring the rest.

In succeeding years, the numbers of attendees gradually declined. Horses and wagons were replaced by automobiles. Kerosene lanterns were replaced by electric lamps, and iceboxes, by refrigerators. The campground village grew to a small city of over 600 buildings crowded together on twenty-nine acres.

Fire sweeps the grounds

Just a little over a week after the surrender of Japan and the end of World War II in August 1945, a fire swept through the campground and destroyed nearly half of the buildings. Dr. Edwin K. Gedney, Gordon College professor, had concluded a sermon entitled "The Kingdom Message" as the fire broke out. The tabernacle, chapels, and the grove area were completely burned as well as two hundred and sixty cottages. There were no death or injuries in this tragic event, but it forever altered the face of the campground.

Since 1945 new places of worship, dining, administration, and lodging have been built. The program has been expanded to include a full-year around ministry.

The ministry of the Alton Bay Christian Conference Center continues to play a vital role in the lives of people and in complementing the ministry of churches throughout New England. Groups from many denominations use the comfortable conference facilities for retreats, planning sessions, and youth camps. Excellent accommodations are available for family camping. Weekend concerts, worship services, and special events take place throughout the summer season.

This summer's program will include a number of special events to celebrate the 125th anniversary. You may request a summer program brochure by contacting the Alton Bay Christian Conference Center, Box 321, Alton Bay, New Hampshire 03810. □

David Bohy has been active with the Alton Bay Campmeeting Association for a number of years. He also serves on the Board of Regents for Berkshire Christian College.

LEADERSHIP STRATEGIES

FOR HUSBANDS AND FATHERS

G. Roger Schoenhals

With all the divisive forces pushing against our homes these days it takes vigilance to keep a family together. Little misunderstandings can lead to discord and alienation. Before long, family ties snap.

What can we do to guard our homes from fracture? And, perhaps more importantly, how can we fix a family that has already broken down?

The story of Joseph

Consider the Old Testament account of Joseph. Even though this story occurred thousands of years ago (Genesis 37-50), it bears repeating today. Not only does it provide understanding into the dynamics of a disintegrating family, it presents a prescription for healing and reconciliation.

Joseph was the favored son. His father, Jacob, set him apart from his other sons and honored him with a coat of many colors. Reuben, Judah, Simeon, and the rest took offense. Jealousy and bitterness found fertile soil. Soon they came to loathe their younger brother.

Joseph inflamed the situation by his own insensitive attitude. He acted haughty. The story describes the unraveling of this home to the point that the brothers conspired to rid themselves of "this dreamer."

At an opportune time, they sold Joseph as a slave to an Egypt-bound caravan and told their father that the young lad had been destroyed by a wild beast. The news devastated the father. And, as the story reveals, a great burden of guilt settled upon the sons.

Haunted by the memory

Almost twenty-five years passed. Jacob was able to work through his grief, but the sons continued to be haunted by the memory of their deed and deception.

Then came the famine. It was so severe that Jacob sent his sons down into Egypt to buy grain. They came and fell before the prince of the land, the man who held the keys to the storage vaults. Standing before Joseph, they failed to recognize their brother in his fine Egyptian clothes. But he knew them immediately.

Had Joseph been a vengeful man, he had the perfect opportunity to "get even." Instead, we see him expressing the kind of

reconciling leadership that ultimately reunited his family. From him we learn the qualities of leadership that will not only help us draw our families back together again, but will help us keep them together.

The following nine qualities of reconciling leadership are especially suited to the father's role in the home. They can, of course, also provide instruction for mothers and others in the family unit. In addition, the example of Joseph can assist us in helping to bring healing to fractured relationships outside the home.

Joseph believed in the sovereignty of God.

He said, "You meant evil against me; but God meant it for good" (Genesis 50:20). He had faith to believe that God could work through even the tragedies of sin and alienation to bring about His perfect will.

Sometimes we may feel that certain interpersonal conflicts are beyond resolution. We may even give up hope and neglect to pray. Somehow we lose confidence in the care and power of God.

But Joseph reminds us that God is greater than our problems and that he can bring good out of hardship. No matter how impossible things seem, God can restore relationships.

Joseph promoted spiritual understanding

He actively sought to teach his brothers spiritual lessons in an inductive manner. Instead of reminding them of their errors, he worked through the circumstance to bring them to the point of self-understanding and confession.

It's all too easy to say, "I told you so," or to start preaching at an offending family member. We can drive the wedge deeper with a judgmental attitude. Joseph took the soft approach. He laid the groundwork for personal spiritual growth.

Read the narrative and trace his methodology. He was a master teacher. He set the stage for life-changing learning to occur.

The dad (or mother) who struts around the house continually barking out orders will only increase tension and resentment. But let the same person exercise authority in a spirit of humility, recognizing that his authority is derived from God, and a much more positive set of dynamics will emerge.

Joseph forgave his brothers

There's no indication of a harbored grudge or a vengeful spirit. Even though he had been the victim of their cruelty and abandonment, he freely forgave them. Indeed, he "kissed all his brothers."

When a person gets bruised by an unkind word or a damaging deed, the natural reaction is to lash out and return the hurt. Pride rears it's head. Jaws tighten. The spine stiffens. And that's the way things stay—sometimes for years.

But Joseph chose the higher road of humility and forgiveness. He let love lead. We see in his life a foretaste of Him who prayed from the cross, "Father, forgive them."

Joseph wept

Eight times in the narrative we are told that Joseph shed tears. Though he was a man of prominent position and power, he maintained a tender heart. He cared deeply and openly about his family.

In our macho-minded society we look down on any man who sheds a tear. Many men feel that crying is a sign of weakness. They avoid wet eyes like the plague.

But not Joseph. He was not ashamed to weep. And those tears helped speed reconciliation. The same is true for us. If we want to be healers in our homes, we will need to be tender enough to allow tears to flow. Such tenderness can be a sign of strength.

A man once told me that he had never seen his father cry. What a pity.

Joseph cared

Closely related to his tenderness was the concern he expressed for his family. His first question after making himself known to his brothers was, "Is my father still alive?"

A friend of mine once said, "Caring is everything." While that may be an overstatement, it does point out the importance of this quality of reconciling leadership. Indeed, without a caring

Continued on next page

spirit, the door to restoration remains shut.

The question for anyone in the midst of interpersonal conflict is this: Do I care enough to lay aside my hurts and to reach out to those who have wronged me? Do I care enough to begin the process of reconciliation?

The dad or mom who truly cares will communicate that care in practical, healing ways. Such behavior will melt hard hearts. It will inspire others to move toward restoration and harmony.

Joseph provided for his family

He made sure his brothers had enough food to take back home with them. He looked not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others (Philippians 2:4). Eventually he also brought the whole family to live in Egypt where he could more adequately provide for their needs.

Being a good provider goes beyond material things to include the gifts of time and emotional support. If we want to bring our families closer together, we will provide those things which build and nourish relationships. We will offer a listening ear, a caring heart, and a helpful hand.

Joseph honored authority

Even though he was a prince in Egypt with power and influence, he submitted to the higher power of the Pharaoh. And beyond that, he humbled himself before God's ultimate lordship. Throughout his life he maintained a healthy respect for authority. He knew his place in the scheme of things.

The dad (or mother) who struts around the house continually barking out orders will only increase tension and resentment. But let the same person exercise authority in a spirit of humility, recognizing that his authority is derived from God, and a much more positive set of dynamics will emerge.

Joseph loved his father

He was respectful and enthusiastic about his own dad. In demonstrating this attitude, he modeled for his own sons the kind of relationship they should establish with him.

It's been said that the best thing a father can do for his children is to love their mother. It also does great good when the father shows love and respect for his own parents.

Joseph's love for his father probably also favorably influenced his brothers.

Joseph took the initiative

Instead of waiting for his brothers to come to him with gifts of repentance, he himself set in motion the process of reconciliation.

Some family members like to leave all the problems for someone else to iron out. They stand back and let another try to resolve the conflict and alienation. Not Joseph. He took the lead and acted to bring about forgiveness and healing.

We can lament the sad state of affairs in our families, or we can follow the example of Joseph and provide reconciling leadership. As forgiven sons and daughters of God, can we do less?

Opening the door to reconciliation

One more thing. It took a calamity to bring Joseph's family back together. The famine, though stressful and severe, proved to be the opportunity Joseph needed to restore his family ties.

That should give us hope. Sometimes when things look the worst, the door is set ajar for a warm ray of light to enter and melt icy emotions. Crisis can provide the setting for reconciliation.

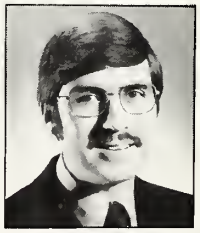
I was once called to a home where the husband and wife had nearly come to blows. When I entered the living room I found one sitting on the couch and the other one in a chair across the room. The air was so thick with hostility you could cut it with a knife.

They had exhausted every word to describe the faults of each other and their voices were hoarse from yelling. In that hostile setting I started to pray aloud. I told the Lord what I was sensing and how very hurt each person felt. I laid it all out before Him as best I could.

Then I turned to the young husband and spoke to him about his leadership role in that home. I reminded him of Jesus who died for us while we were sinners. He was despised and rejected and yet He laid down His life for us. And He has given us an example to follow.

I told him that the Bible teaches us that a man should love his wife as "Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her" (Ephesians 5:25).

Continued on next page



G. Roger Schoenhals is a freelance writer living in Seattle, Washington.

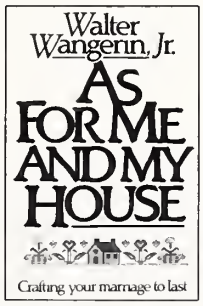
Married couples have a job to do

William Batson

Walter Wangerin, Jr. is an award-winning author, a master storyteller, and a Lutheran pastor. With this book he moves into the role of counselor and husband. *As for Me and My House* (Thomas Nelson Publisher) looks at the ingredients of a happy, successful marriage.

Wangerin uses the early chapters of the book for building the groundwork of marriage. He calls it "marriage work." These foundational thoughts deal with the work of accommodation, which faces all married couples in the early days of marriage.

Marriage forces changes upon the partners, which regardless how well prepared they thought they were, surprise them and require specialized work from both of them. The woman does not know who her husband is until he is her husband. Neither does the man know who his wife is until she exists as his wife.



Wangerin says the newly married couple has a job to do, a good job, a hopeful and rewarding job. And it will take a patient, gentle energy to accomplish this labor well.

This early marriage work is essential to building a marriage that will last. Wangerin divides it into three parts: (1) Idealization/realization. Our idealized image of the other person will (must) be replaced by a true realization of who he/she is. Good work here leads to acceptance, while poor work may lead to alienation. (2) Mutualization - the seeking after the one pattern which will harmonize the two patterns that the husband and wife have brought together. Good work here will be an honest and deep character adjustment, while poor work may lead to disengagement. (3) Gender differences. The natural differences between men and women, often invisible during courtship, become clearly apparent in marriage. Good work will (must) celebrate and make use of the differences. If either partner tries to change what cannot be changed in the other, that is poor work; and poor work leads to discontent in all areas of the marriage.

This early marriage work provides excellent material for newlyweds and those soon to be married. I think a pastor would find this information valuable for sharing with couples before they marry.

The second part of the book explains the most significant tool for the work of marriage, the healing gift of forgiveness. Wangerin defines forgiveness, tells why it is so necessary, and shows how you may use it. It is in this section that he reveals a very moving experience from his own marriage.

Part three of *As For Me and My House* is given to the six continuing tasks required of each spouse to build the marriage and to keep it in good repair. They are: truthfulness and dependability; sharing the tasks of survival; talking and listening; sexuality; healing; and, volunteering and gifting. Included in this section are chapters on avoiding adultery and healing the abuser.

I found several new and insightful thoughts in this book that will nurture a strong relationship in my marriage. You, too, can use it to gain a better understanding of the vows made on your wedding day. □

William Batson is pastor of the Portsmouth, New Hampshire Advent Christian Church and founder of "The Family Builders," an organization committed to strengthening family relationships through seminars, family life conferences, tapes, and published writings.

Leadership Strategies From page 16

I said, "Love is the strongest power in the world and when we truly love we put into motion God's healing medicine for broken relationships."

We sat there for several minutes in silence. Then something wonderful happened. The husband got up, walked across the room to his wife, took her hand, drew her to her feet, and embraced her. As he held her, he wept.

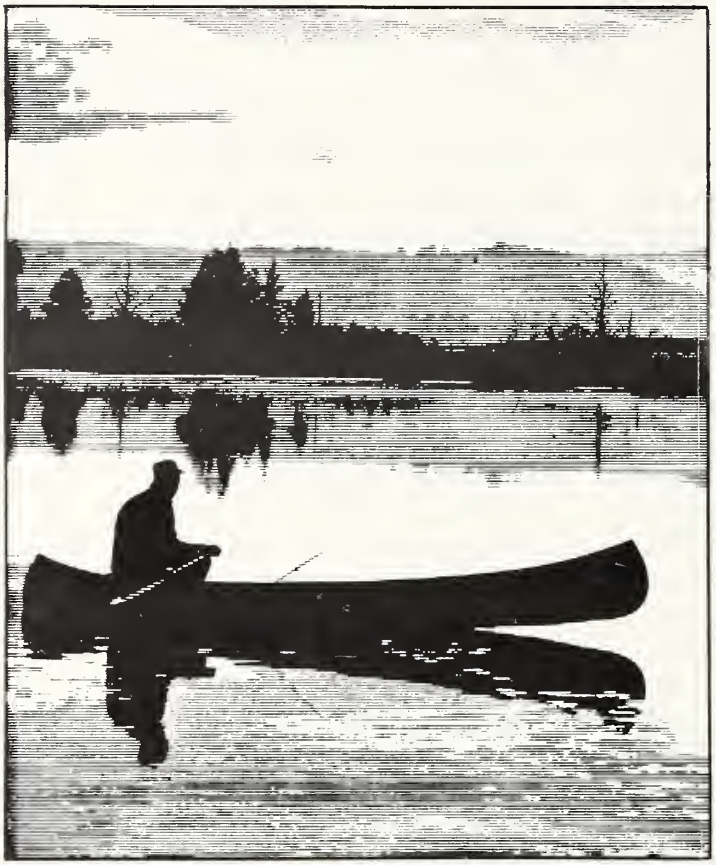
In the precious moments which followed, the tension dissolved and the relationship was restored. The power of love prevailed.

God intends for us to live together in unity and happiness. He wants harmony in the home. And His love can make it so. His love, working through reconciling leadership, can bring a family together again. □

Caroline Michael
Director

Three Reflections

Ruth McPhee



Reflections, reflections, reflections. What comes to your mind when you think of that word? Examples of reflections I'll share with you are not new thoughts, but I trust they will serve as a reminder, an encouragement, or a challenge.

First of all, I think of reflections in nature. In my mind's eye I picture a white birchbark canoe anchored to a gray rock on a peaceful lake. I can see the reflection is in living color. Reflections are beautiful if the objects reflected are beautiful. This beauty in nature makes me think about God, the Creator.

The second reflection I think of involves people—and again draws my attention to God who created me.

God planned for families. Imagine a plan so beautiful that a man and woman become husband and wife and their union results in the birth of a baby who resembles his mom and dad. Don't we all enjoy trying to decide who the baby looks like? If five people suggest who they think the baby looks like and in what way, there may be five different opinions!

As a baby grows, we go beyond physical comparisons of how the child resembles his parents to how the child responds and behaves. When a child acts like we wish he wouldn't, haven't you heard one parent jokingly say that he is now acting like the other parent? The responsibility of taking care of a baby's physical needs is demanding and important, but our responsibilities go beyond that because children learn how to do things by watching their parents—they reflect what they learn at home.

In a recent letter from friends who had left their children for a weekend, they shared that the babysitter remarked how much the son was like his father in his speech and actions, and that even his mannerisms were reproductions of his dad. What a responsibility is ours when we think of the impact on others we have by the way we live our lives. It should be our sincere prayer that we will be living models which influence people to commitment to Jesus Christ. It reminds me of Paul's words in Philippians 4:9, "Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me—put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you."

The atmosphere of our homes is important. Children form their values and communications skills by observing how mom and dad communicate with each other, choose priorities, and remain consistent in attitudes and decision-making.

In God's image

I am glad I don't have to end here or I would be leaving out the most important reflection. Without this third instance, we could think we're able to be the kind of example we should be on our own. That would fit the humanistic philosophy which is being widely taught today. It is imperative that we focus on

God's plan. The third reflection shows that God made man in His image, in righteousness and holiness. But sin marred that image. It's similar to a mirror that is smashed. Sin separates us from God and makes it impossible to reflect God until we take care of our sin.

This draws our attention to God's provision for forgiveness of sin through Jesus Christ. Jesus is the "image of the invisible God," (Colossians 1:15). When we receive Jesus as Savior and Lord, we get help in living God's way—in reflecting God in our lives. The mirror is repaired.

When Jesus went back to heaven, he sent the Holy Spirit to live within us. With the Holy Spirit we have the potential for love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, gentleness, self-control — all the things we would like to have and be. We can become all God plans for us to become.

In the total picture of God's plan, there is a beautiful cycle when moms and dads have a right relationship with God and are experiencing the help of the Holy Spirit to live pleasing to God. Moms and dads would teach their children about God from birth as He admonishes us in Deuteronomy 6:6-7. Parents would be the ones spending days and nights with their children if God's Word were read and obeyed. Moms and dads would keep their commitment to each other as long as they lived and their children would have the security of one mother and one father in the home. The goal for our children should be that they would trust in the Lord Jesus as Savior and Lord and then become all that God intends them to be.

Remember, reflections are as beautiful as their object or image. All those who trust in Jesus are to reflect Him. Then our children will have a model which will influence them to commitment to Jesus Christ, too.

Children may think mom and dad are perfect for awhile. As they mature, they will realize that mom and dad aren't a perfect reflection of God. At this point, they should be directed to keep their eyes on Jesus who is perfect and will never disappoint them or let them down. Thus, as our children become adults, we are to teach them to transfer their allegiance from us as parents to God. Then as our children become parents, the cycle will continue from generation to generation. □

Ruth is a wife, mother, and homemaker who is serious about reflecting her Savior. She uses her spiritual gifts in her church and exhibits the gift of hospitality in her home. She has been used of the Lord in discipling ministries. She is married to Len and they have a college-age son and a teen-aged daughter.

Enhance Your Prayer Life

Use Operation World: Handbook for World Intercession by Patrick Johnstone. "Truly the greatest single contribution any of us will ever make to world evangelization will be to give ourselves to prayer and to the mobilization of a movement of united prayer for spiritual awakening where we live. There is nothing more strategic than to foster prayer for the release of the power of God within the church of Jesus Christ," states Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship to advertise this helpful resource for Christians who want God to use their prayers to change the world. It gives background facts and figures about each country of the world: it's population, language, politics, religions, and churches. Detailed maps and charts are included.

WHFM circles will benefit from owning and using a copy of this book. It's available from Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship, P.O. Box 7875, Madison, WI 53707-7895 for $5.95 plus shipping charges.

—Connie Jones
National Spiritual Life Chairman

CONNIE JONES
902 Hemlock Dr. NE, Lenoir, NC 28645

How Does Your Garden Grow?

The pink blossoms on our crabapple tree are giving way to leaves. Violets are blooming in the backyard, and dogwood trees add a touch of fantasy. I'm now enjoying the industrious yard work of the previous residents of this parsonage. How thankful I am as I am definitely not the possessor of a green thumb. Another fringe benefit of being a pastor's wife is the frequent gifts of fresh produce from parishioners' gardens. How we enjoy the okra, green beans, corn, potatoes, and tomatoes that come our way! "Reaping where we have not sown!"

While we may not all grow flowers or vegetable gardens, we are all involved in gardening — *spiritual gardening*. The Master Gardener expects us to plant seeds and produce fruit.

Planting seeds

Think how many times Jesus used parables about planting seeds to illustrate Kingdom growth. Our faithful testimony sown in the good soil of human hearts brings results. The master gardener has promised that His Word will take root and grow. It may flourish quickly, or it may take long years of patient cultivating, but it will grow. Aren't you glad He works with you providing the needed showers and light — showers of blessings and the light of His love and fellowship? Why are we so afraid to witness when He has promised so many provisions and guaranteed the result? Could it be that we just don't trust Him enough?

As I read the questions above I distinctly remember occasions when I let opportunities to plant seeds for Christ slip by. Yes! sometimes it was from fear. While I sorrow over lost opportunities, I'm encouraged when I remember that the master gardener is planting a crop of fruit in me. Along with love, joy, peace, and goodness He has promised to give me faith. As my faith and love for Him increase, my fears become silly and vain. His Spirit can and will give boldness to witness. I want to have so much spiritual vitality that my life will be a witness to others — don't you? Praise God! We can have it! The master gardener has promised to begin that good work in us and to continue it.

Removing weeds

If we are not as productive with our spiritual gardens as we wish to be, what can we do? How about a little weeding? Are grumblings, bitterness, selfishness, or wrong attitudes getting in the way? They need to go! Yesterday I pulled some old dead growth out of a flower bed to make room for the new foliage. I am sure there are some old dead branches in me that the master gardener wants to prune. It will be painful; but He promises that when He prunes, new life and more abundant fruit will result. That's what I want! How about you?

I once heard Mrs. Edman, wife of the former president of Wheaton College, tell about the location of Scripture Press publishing house. It seems that between Wheaton and Glen Ellyn, Illinois there once was an old peat bog. Passengers on local buses would hold their breath in that neighborhood because the stench of decaying vegetation was over-powering. One day bulldozers and steam shovels came and cleared away the debris. The bog was excavated and the area filled with good soil. Landscapers came in and planted gardens and lawns. The buildings erected on that site are now those of one of the largest gospel publishing houses in the world.

What a picture of the work the Lord Jesus wants to do in our lives. He wants to remove the deadly growth of sin and make us new and beautiful creations from whom the gospel can flow to an ever needy world.

How does your garden grow? □

Children's Ministries
SHELLY WARREN,
National KJ Superintendent
7752 SE Harrison, Milwaukie, Oregon 97222

Rebirth

Spring has arrived! "Spring fever" is not a medical term used by doctors, but a term that aptly describes the feelings of yearning, newness, and languor that may affect people at the advent of spring. For some of us, in milder climates, those feelings hit us back in February; but growing up in Vermont allows me to remember many bouts of "spring fever" during May.

Many of you may be experiencing the "wiggly worm" syndrome at your meetings with the children in your church. Even as adults we can sympathize and empathize with children who are bursting with energy and a desire to participate in the rejuvenation that takes place each spring. Spring is a wonderful time of year to utilize a child's five senses benefiting your teaching as well as the child's learning. God is the creator of our senses. Using these senses to explore the world that He created can help all of us better understand our Creator.

This is a good time of year to plan some outdoor activities. The greatness of God can clearly be seen in his creation and children are especially in tune with this. As your class *hears* the birds singing and the rustling of the wind through the trees, *smells* freshly cut grass and the sweetness of blossoms, *sees* fluffy white clouds floating in a bright blue sky as branches blow in the breeze, *tastes* the salty spray from the ocean as waves thunder to the shore, and *feels* the warm fur of a kitten lying in the sun as a cool breeze lifts its fur, they will experience the presence of God.

Although anytime of the year is a good time to share the gospel message, spring is full of rebirths which can bring special meaning to us and those who hear the message of salvation from us. As we experience the rebirth of a tree that appeared dead during winter and watch beautiful sweet smelling blossoms fill branches that appeared stark and lonely, we also can experience the rebirth of a life that without Christ could never experience the fullness for which He created it. The miracle of God's plan for our salvation through rebirth can be shared, and the need for rebirth will be understood more clearly by our children in the midst of the rebirth of spring.

As we teach children's ministries let us use "spring fever" to our advantage rather than disadvantage. Spring is a wonderful time of year to see the beauty of creation and the miracle of rebirth. Let us focus on our Creator and Savior. □

Mission Prayer Partnership

June

19 **Pray** for **Margaret Helms** as she moves to a new city. She is going to Cebu, the second largest city in the Philippines.

20 **Pray** for **David Vignali** as he prepares for a home leave.

21 **Praise** the Lord and pray for our new short-term missionary, **Bruce Arnold,** as he begins work in the Philippines.

22 The **Warriners** ask for your prayers that more Japanese people would accept Christ Jesus as Saviour.

23 **Pray** for **Floyd** and **Musa Powers** as they encourage the pastors in Japan to live for Christ and not for material possessions.

24 **Pray** for the people and missionaries at the **Eastern Region WHFMS Convention** on this day.

25 **Praise God,** the six graduates in the School of Evangelism in **India** are now pastoring churches.

26 **Pray** for **Timmy Jewett** on this his birthday.

27 **Pray** for **Barbara White** as she faithfully administers medicine to the sick from the dispensary in Kodaikanal, India.

28 **Pray** for the **mother** of **Alice Brown,** that she would receive healing from the Lord.

29 **Pray** for the Bible studies and other work established by **Frank** and **Judy Jewett** during their stay in the Philippines. May this work continue in their absence.

30 **Praise God!** We were able to grant the request of the pastor in the **Nigeria** work. We sent him $3,000 for a used motorcycle. He will now be able to travel into the jungle area to evangelize.

31 We have added another Mexican worker to our list — **Ezequiel Sotelo.** Please **pray** for **him.**

July

1 **Pray** for **Thambusamy Devairakkam** and the

Advent Christian work in the Malaysia churches.

2 Pray for the **Devasahayams** as they work among the laborers in the nearby rubber plantations.

3 **Praise the Lord** for this is **Alberto Gomez**'s birthday. Pray for Mexico.

4 Pray for **Beryl Joy Hollis** as she serves our Lord in the Madras, India area.

5 Pray with **Alice Brown** as she seeks to find someone to serve as director of Oro Bible College.

6 **Praise God** for the beautiful summer **weather.** God is a good God!

7 Pray for people to teach English in **Japan.**

8 Pray for the **presidents** of our national conferences.

9 Pray for revival in our **churches** and on our mission fields.

10 Pray for **Francis Ssebikindu** and the work in Memphis. Pray for the condition of the inner city dwellers this summer.

11 Pray for another record-breaking **Penny Crusade** as churches wrap up their campaign.

12 Pray for the **Urban Task Force** of the Advent Christian Church. Call upon Elohim, our strong one to open doors and finances to provide for the poor, unchurched people in our country.

13 Pray for Christians in **China,** that as their country has been moving into the direction of being modern, may Christ be the center of it all.

14 Pray for our retired **missionaries,** praise God for their faithfulness.

15 Pray for **revival** in our churches and on our mission fields.

16 Pray for the safety of **Dave Vignali** as he travels through our Central Region states bringing the good news of his work in the Philippines.

17 Pray for the president of General Conference, **Rev. Donald E. Wrigley.**

18 Pray for the **office staff** in our **mailroom** who work faithfully to bring this magazine to you.

Are You Ready for Campmeeting? **From pg. 3**

Christian ministry than to plan weekend retreats. Churches that do not plan camping ministries for young people *and* adults are missing great opportunities to reach people for Christ and disciple believers in the Christian life.

Camp also provides a laboratory where we can learn ministry and service for Christ. The New Testament clearly teaches that ministry is for all believers not just the pastor. I am thankful that camps gave me the opportunity to serve as a counselor, day care worker, program director, kitchen crew member, and Bible teacher. What was even better was they didn't demand perfection. They gave me the freedom to learn, to test my skills, and yes, at times to fail. They instilled in me an attitude of openness to learning new ideas and skills in a supportive environment.

A commitment to excellence

I'm concerned that Advent Christians seem to be losing enthusiasm for camping. Campmeeting isn't something that should be relegated to the past because it has so much potential to touch lives with the Christian faith. But if our camping ministries are going to be effective in these last years of the 20th century, we need to commit ourselves to excellence in two areas: facilities and leadership.

Our facilities must be well cared for and in good repair. Effective camping, especially for young people, doesn't happen without ample recreational opportunities such as swimming, archery, basketball, and hiking. Jesus is concerned about the whole person and that concern involves his physical, emotional, social, and spiritual components. Effective Christian camping happens when we take seriously our Lord's commitment to the whole person.

And we must strive for excellence in leadership. A good camping program involves a well trained staff, especially in regard to camp counselors. I hope that Advent Christian camps are putting much effort into counselor training for their children's and teen camps. Untrained counselors can have a disastrous effect upon camping ministry.

We must remember exactly what Christian camping is: ministry. Let's celebrate the past but let's also remember the best years are yet to come. There are lives that God wants to touch at Advent Christian camps in 1988, 1989, and beyond. For that to happen, it will take our commitment to quality Christian camping and our willingness to see our camps as key places for Christian discipleship and outreach. □

The Church in Turmoil

Carl Rundgren

In the past year, Christians throughout the United States — and no doubt around the world — have been shocked by the scandals that have been exposed within major television ministries. Some of the most visible spokesmen for Jesus Christ have been removed from their ministries and have become the brunt of severe criticism — and of many comedians' jokes.

I, like many other Christians, have found this situation to be a major concern: a source of ridicule by the world of the church, a cause for embarrassment when trying to speak to others of Jesus Christ, and a source of pain because the cause of Christ may be seriously set back. My first response, after expressing surprise, was anger that men in visible positions had botched their jobs and caused such grief. It seems easy to say that such events show a total disregard for the holiness of God — both on the part of the evangelists and their followers who seem so willing to forgive and forget without evidence of genuine confession and repentance (with respect to Jim Bakker) or without adequate time for healing and rehabilitation (with respect to Jimmy Swaggart).

My second response has been quite different from my first. I've been thinking about the people involved — both the preachers and their congregations. If there is blame to be laid, I believe both parties should share in it. Had preachers and congregations been applying the truths of Scripture to their own lives, these sad happenings might not have taken place. It is sad, indeed, that men who spend their lives preaching about the resources of Jesus Christ fail to understand the importance of those resources for themselves. Equally sad is the widespread underestimation of the sinful nature of man — which highlights the need that all Christians have for the salvation which Jesus freely gives.

I believe a main element of this problem is the *pedestal complex.* Congregations build pedestals. Preachers all too readily climb aboard. The longer one stays on the pedestal, the harder it becomes to let people see you as you really are. My heart goes out to Jimmy Swaggart who, like all of us, wrestles with sin daily. Because of his pedestal, he was unwilling to confess his weakness to anyone — except the Lord. And the Lord says, "Confess your sins to one another, that you may be healed." He couldn't — because of his pedestal, which his congregation had helped to build. And so, he wrestled alone with his sin — and lost, again and again. He dared not be real.

I further believe that his hatred of his own sin was evidenced in the severity of his attacks on Jim Bakker. Complex, isn't it? Yet I cannot help but think that if Jimmy Swaggart had confided in a Christian brother about his battle — and agreed with him in prayer — that he would have controlled his desire to sin.

There are those who say my scenario is wrong. They would harshly judge these men. And in so doing, they would continue the scenario. It is time to let God teach his church through these events. God hates sin, but He loves the sinner. And He offers forgiveness and cleansing to any and all who are willing to confess before God and man that he wrestles with sin daily — and that he receives salvation, healing, and peace only through faith in Jesus Christ. □

Carl Rundgren is pastor of the Advent Christian Church in Northwood Narrows, N.H. and manager of the Family Christian Bookstore in Dover, N.H.

KNOW SOMEONE WHO DESERVES A JOURNALISM SCHOLARSHIP?

The 325 periodical members of the Evangelical Press Association are vitally interested in the future of religious journalism.

The Association offers $500 to $1,200 scholarships each year to Christian college juniors and seniors, and graduate students, committed to a career in print journalism.

Further details and application forms are available. Forms must be completed and returned by April 1.

Write now to:

epa

Executive Director
Evangelical Press Association
P.O. Box 4550
Overland Park, Kansas 66204

Your Servants for Christ's Cause

International Missionaries

Philippines

Alice Brown (March 24)
c/o Mrs. Harriet Brown
3 Howe Street
Rochester, NH 03867

Margaret Helms (September 18)
P.O. Box 263
6000 Cebu City
PHILIPPINES

Frank and Judy Jewett
(D[illegible]er 11 and January 29)
D[illegible]ett (June 13, 1976)
Ti[illegible]ett (June 26, 1978)
Le[illegible]ett (April 13, 1980)
34 M[illegible] Street
[illegible] ME 03903

David Vignali (May 10)
P.O. Box 223
9000 Cagayan de Oro
PHILIPPINES

Japan

Floyd and Musa Powers
(October 8 and February 28)
Rebecca Powers (Nov. 11, 1971)
4-11-18 Motoyama Kitamachi
Higashinada ku, Kobe shi 658
JAPAN

Austin and Dorothy Warriner
(January 1 and January 18)
3-37 Okayama Higashi
5 Chome, Shijonawate Shi
Osaka Fu 575
JAPAN

India

Marion Damon (March 27)
Box 17, Andivilla
Kodaikanal 624101
INDIA

Beryl Joy Hollis (December 16)
American Advent Mission
Velacheri, Madras 600 042
INDIA

Barbara White (January 14)
Box 17, Andivilla
Kodaikanal 624101
INDIA

On Leave

Bessie Smith (March 27)
Box 657, Waukewan Street
Meredith, NH 03253

[illegible]onal Missionaries

[illegible]sia

[illegible]busamy and
[illegible]ia Devairakkam
[illegible]lan Sayang Housing Trust
[illegible] Kluang, Johor
[illegible]YSIA

[illegible] and Beulah Devasahayam
[illegible]an Cempaka
[illegible] Gembira
[illegible] Banting, Selangor
[illegible]YSIA

Memphis

Francis and Lyne Ssebikindu
(May 13 and May 8)
Faith Nancy (September 28, 1982)
Ashley Grace (November 21, 1985)
2590 Faxon Avenue
Memphis, TN 38112

Mexico

Abel Garcia-Lara
368 Anita Street, Sp. 62
Chula Vista, CA 92011

Alberto Gomez
Arturo Angulo
Ever Perez
Ezequiel Serrato
c/o Abel Garcia-Lara

Nigeria

E.A. Akpan—Superintendent
Nigerian Advent Christian Mission
P.O. Box 1642, Uyo
Akwa Ibom State
NIGERIA

Advent Christian General Conference
P.O. Box 23152
Charlotte, NC 28212

[illegible]l Patterson; World Missions
[illegible]ne Griswold; Christian Education
Caroline Michael; Women's Ministries
Robert W. Cole; Finance
Robert Mayer; Publications
David Northup; Executive Vice-president

AC04849
University of North Carolina
Serials Dept. Davis Library
080 A
Chapel Hill, NC 27514

C286.7
A24

Advent Christian WITNESS

July/August 1988

Jesus is Coming Again:

Five Prophetic Thinkers and Their Messages

FEATURES

Commitment to Communicate 4

In the last of a three-part series, Dr. James Dobson discusses how good communication skills can strengthen Christian families.

Jesus is Coming Again: Five Great Advent Christian Prophetic Thinkers and Their Messages 8

The message of Christ's second coming has been the heartbeat of Advent Christian doctrine and missions since 1860. This series looks at how five Advent Christian prophetic teachers expressed that message and how their teaching is relevant to Christians today.

- **William Sheldon** by Clyde E. Hewitt
- **Daniel T. Taylor** by Oral Collins
- **Susie Davis** by Freeman Barton
- **Edwin K. Gedney** by David A. Dean
- **Earl Waterman** by Robert C. Hewitt

DEPARTMENTS

From the Editor 3

Women's Ministries 26

Prayer Partnership 29

Family Builder 31

ON THE COVER:

An artist's conception of a nineteenth century Advent Christian evangelist proclaiming the soon return of Jesus Christ.

photo from Advent Christian publications archives

Volume 36, Number 7

Advent Christian WITNESS

Editor **Robert Mayer**

Contributing Editors **Caroline Michael, Harold Patterson, William Batson, Clayton Blackstone, David McCarthy**

Art Director **Linda Perault**

Typesetting **Susan Gettis**

The Advent Christian Witness (ISSN #007-740) is published monthly except for a combined July-August issue by the Advent Christian General Conference of America, 14601 Albemarle Road, P.O. Box 23152, Charlotte, N.C. 28212. Subscription rates in the United States and Canada: One year, $11.00. Single copy: $1.00. Overseas rate: One year, $14.00. Second class postage paid at Charlotte, N.C. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Advent Christian Witness, P.O. Box 23152, Charlotte, N.C. 28212.

As the official publication of the Advent Christian General Conference, the Advent Christian Witness publishes the teachings of the Advent Christian Church and promotes the task of evangelism both in North America and around the world. The views expressed in this magazine are those of the author and may not necessarily reflect those of the editor or the Advent Christian General Conference. Member: Evangelical Press Association.

Copyright © 1988 by the Advent Christian General Conference of America, Inc.

FROM THE EDITOR

MORAL MAJORITY: TEN YEARS LATER

It's been almost ten years since organizations like the Moral Majority, the American Coalition for Traditional Values, Evangelicals for Social Action, and a host of others galloped onto the stage of American politics. Up until the late 1970s, politics was something most evangelicals knew little about and cared even less for.

The story of how that attitude began to change might be best summarized by Edward Dobson, a colleague of Jerry Falwell and an active participant in the Moral Majority (now called the Liberty Federation). According to Mr. Dobson, "...it was in 1976 that Jerry Falwell realized how much potential there was to influence the political process. After Jimmy Carter's *Playboy* interview, Falwell publicly disagreed with President Carter on his TV program.

"Falwell, much to his surprise, received a call from (campaign manager) Hamilton Jordon on behalf of Carter requesting him to refrain from such comments and to please 'back off.' Falwell was startled that his comments would cause such concern and came to perceive the incident as his 'initial baptism" into the world of politics..." (this excerpt taken from *The Bible, Politics, and Democracy*, edited by Richard John Neuhaus.)

That phone call started a movement. That movement has profoundly influenced not only American politics but local churches, denominations, and Christian organizations. But that influence has not translated into results. If anything, our culture is more secular, more materialistic, and less compassionate than ten years ago. What will it take for Christian political activism to be truly effective in the next ten years?

First, Christians need to make their points about issues in ways that will speak to people who don't care about the Bible and who aren't Christians. It's not enough to quote a few Bible verses and pretend that all arguments are settled. When Christians ask legislators to restrict abortion, to consider the impact of a piece of legislation on the family, or to address poverty and joblessness in the inner city; we better be able to make our case in ways that will compel others who aren't Christians to agree and act with us.

Continued on page 24

Thank You PACT Supporters

There's a special group of *Advent Christian Witness* readers your editor would like to give special recognition to: those who contribute to PACT when they renew their *Witness* subscriptions. PACT stands for Publishing Advent Christian Truths and those subscribers who participate contribute an extra ten dollars in addition to their subscription renewal price.

Thank you P.A.C.T. supporters! Your extra gift enables us to keep printing the *Advent Christian Witness*. Your support means that we can continue to relate the gospel of Christ and the distinctive teachings of the Advent Christian Church to the needs of people living in our needy and hurting society. Our staff appreciates your support!

Commitment to COMMUNICATE

James Dobson

The third recommendation by our panel of six hundred represents another basic ingredient of good marriages. Like the other two, it begins with the letter "C" and focuses on good communication between husbands and wives. This topic has been beaten to death by writers of books on the subject of marriage, so I will hit it lightly. I would like to offer a few less overworked thoughts on marital communication, however, that might be useful to young married couples.

Recognize differences

First, it must be understood that males and females differ yet another way not mentioned earlier. Research makes it clear that little girls are blessed with greater linguistic ability than little boys, and it remains a lifelong talent. Simply stated, she talks more than he. As an adult, she typically expressed her feelings and thoughts far better than her husband and is often irritated by his reticence. God may have given her 50,000 words per day and her husband only 25,000. He comes home from work with 24,975 used up and merely grunts his way through the evening. He may descend into Monday night football while his wife is dying to expend her remaining 25,000 words.

Erma Bombeck complained about this tendency of men to get lost in televised sports while their wives hunger for companionship. She even proposed that a new ordinance be passed which would be called "Bombeck's Law." According to it, a man who had watched 168,000 football games in a single season could be declared legally dead. All in favor say "Aye."

The complexity of the human personality guarantees exceptions to every generalization. Yet every knowledgeable marriage counselor knows that the inability or unwillingness of husbands

to reveal their feelings to their wives is one of the common complaints of women. It can almost be stated as an absolute: Show me a quiet, reserved husband and I'll show you a frustrated wife. She wants to know what he's thinking and what happened at his office and how he sees the children, and especialy, how he feels about her. The husband, by contrast, finds some things better left unsaid. It is a classic struggle.

The paradox is that a highly emotional, verbal woman is sometimes drawn to the strong silent type. He seemed so secure and "in control" before they were married. She admired his unflappable nature and his coolness in a crisis. Then they were married and the flip side of his great strength became obvious. He wouldn't talk! She then gnashed her teeth for the next forty years because her husband *couldn't* give what she needed from him. It just wasn't in him.

Solutions involve compromise

What is the solution to such communicative problems at home? As always, it involves compromise. A man has a clear responsibility to "cheer up his wife which he hath taken" (Deuteronomy 24:5). He must not claim himself "a rock" who will never allow himself to be vulnerable again. He must press himself to open his heart and share his deeper feelings with his wife. Time must be reserved for meaningful conversations. Taking walks and going out to breakfast and riding bicycles on Saturday mornings are conversation inducers that keep love alive. Communication *can* occur even in families where the husband leans inward and the wife leans outward. In these instances, I believe, the primary responsibility for compromise lies with the husband.

On the other hand, women must understand and accept the fact that some men cannot be what they want them to be. I have previously addressed this need for wives to accept reality as it is presented to them in *What Wives Wish Their Husbands Knew About Women.*

A man has a clear responsibility to "cheer up his wife which he hath taken" (Deuteronomy 24:5). He must not claim himself 'a rock' who will never allow himself to be vulnerable again. He must press himself to open his heart and share his deeper feelings with his wife.

Some of the women who have read this are married to men who will never be able to understand the feminine needs I have described. Their emotional structure makes it impossible for them to comprehend the feelings and frustrations of another—particularly those occurring in the opposite sex. These men will not read an article such as this, and would probably resent it if they did. They have never been required to "give," and have no idea how it is done. What, then, is to be the reaction of their wives? What would you do if your husband lacked the insight to be what you need him to be?

My advice is that you change that which can be altered, explain that which can be understood, teach that which can be learned, revise that which can be improved, resolve that which can be settled, and negotiate that which is open to compromise. Create the best marriage possible from the raw materials brought by two imperfect human beings with two distinctly unique personalities. But for all the rough edges which can never be smoothed and the faults which can never be eradicated, try to develop the best possible perspective and determine in your mind to accept reality as it is. The first principle of mental health is to accept that which cannot be changed. You could easily go to pieces over the adverse circumstances beyond your control. You can will to hang tough, or you can yield to cowardice. Depression is often evidence of emotional surrender.

Someone wrote:

Life can't give me joy and peace;
it's up to me to will it.
Life just gives me time and space,
it's up to me to fill it.

Develop friendships

Can you accept the fact that your husband will never be able to meet all of your needs and aspirations? Seldom does one human being satisfy every longing and hope in the breast of another. Obviously, this coin has two sides: You can't be his perfect woman, either. He is not

more equipped to resolve your entire package of emotional needs than you are to become his sexual dream machine every twenty-four hours. Both partners have to settle for human foibles and faults and irritability and fatigue and occasional nighttime "headaches." A good marriage is not one where perfection reigns: It is a relationship where a healthy perspective overlooks a multitude of "unresolvables." Thank goodness my wife, Shirley, has adopted this attitude toward me!

I am especially concerned about the mother of small children who chooses to stay at home as a full-time homemaker. If she looks to her husband as a provider of all adult conversation and the satisfier of every emotional need, their marriage can quickly run aground. He will return home from work somewhat depleted and in need of "tranquility," as we discussed earlier. Instead, he finds a woman who is continually starved for attention and support. When she sees in his eyes that he has nothing left to give, that is the beginning of sorrows. She either becomes depressed or angry (or both) and he has no idea how he can help her. I understand this feminine need and have attempted to articulate it to men. Nevertheless, a woman's total dependence on a man places too great a pressure on the marital relationship. It sometimes cracks under the strain.

What can be done, then? A woman with a normal range of emotional needs cannot simply ignore them. They scream for fulfillment. Consequently, I have long recommended that women in this situation seek to supplement what their husbands can give by cultivating meaningful female relationships. Having girl friends with whom they can talk heart to heart, study the Scriptures and share childcare techniques can be vital to mental health. Without this additional support, loneliness and low self-esteem can accumulate and begin to choke the marriage to death.

The first principle of mental health is to accept that which cannot be changed. You could easily go to pieces over the adverse circumstances beyond your control. You can will to hang tough, or you can yield to cowardice. Depression is often evidence of emotional cowardice.

This solution of feminine company seems so obvious that one might ask why it is even worthwhile to suggest it. Unfortunately, it is not so easy to implement. A woman must often search for companionship today. We've witnessed a breakdown in relationships between women in recent years. A hundred years ago, wives and mothers did not have to seek female friendship. It was programmed into the culture. Women canned food together, washed clothes at the creek together, and cooperated in church charity work together. When babies were born, the new mother was visited by aunts, sisters, neighbors, and church women who came to help her diaper, feed, and care for the child. There was an automatic support system that surrounded women and made life easier. Its absence translates quickly into marital conflict and can lead to divorce.

To the young wives who are reading these words, I urge you *not to let this scenario happen to you.* Invest some time in your female friends—even though you are busy. Resist the temptation to pull into the walls of your home and wait for your husband to be all things to you. Stay involved as a family in a church that meets your needs and preaches the Word. Remember that you are surrounded by many other women with similar feelings. Find them. Care for them. Give to them. And in the process, your own self-esteem will rise. Then when you are content, your marriage will flourish. It sounds simplistic but that's the way we are made. We are designed to love God and to love one another. Deprivation of either function can be devastating. □

Dr. James Dobson is recognized as one of the foremost authorities on marriage and family relationships. This article is excerpted from Love for a Lifetime, *copyright ©1987 by James Dobson. Published by Multnomah Press and used by permission.*

Special Feature

Jesus is Coming Again

Five Great Advent Christian Prophetic Thinkers and Their Message

Jesus is Coming Again

Five Great Advent Christian Prophetic Thinkers and Their Message

Jesus is coming again. That message has been the heartbeat of Advent Christian thinking, preaching, and missions since our beginning in 1860. Last summer at our General Conference meeting in Charleston, West Virginia, five scholars presented a workshop focusing on Advent Christian prophetic teaching. Each scholar selected a significant Advent Christian prophetic teacher and discussed their contribution to the denomination and its heritage. What difference does the return of Jesus Christ make today? The viewpoints expressed by these five prophetic teachers — Daniel T. Taylor, William Sheldon, Susie Davis, Edwin Gedney, and Earl Waterman — point us to some significant answers to this crucial question.

WILLIAM SHELDON

Clyde E. Hewitt

In the 125 years since the Advent Christian Church came into existence few of its servants can claim a higher rank among its evangelistic preachers, doctrinal writers, prophetic expositors, and scholars than can William Sheldon. Some rival him, of course, but a close study of the man and his ministry cannot help but place him high in such a group. *Messiah's Advocate* once called him "nearly a household word among Adventists."

Embraces Adventist message at age 12

William Sheldon was born in tiny Stockbridge, Vermont, on November 15, 1830. His grandfather, Thaddeus, like William Miller's father, was a captain in the American Revolution who also, like William Miller, himself, fought in the battle of Plattsburg in 1814. For much of his early childhood young William Sheldon lived on a farm in Hampton, New York, just six miles from the home of William Miller.

In 1840 his family moved to Chateaugay, New York, about forty miles west of Hampton, but near the Canadian border. Two years later Miller's message of the soon coming of Christ reached this frontier hamlet and William Sheldon, all of 12 years of age, embraced it.

Those who knew him then were to later describe his thoughtful and reflective nature and the avidity with which he now studied the Scriptures concerning the return of Christ and other matters. One neighbor who hired him to hoe corn recalled that the boy worked as fast as he could to get through his row whereupon he would take out

his New Testament and read it until the others had finished their rows. This so amused the men with him that they deliberately worked slowly so as to give the boy time to study his Testament.

Sheldon's formal education was limited to Poulteney Academy in Vermont which lay across the river from Hampton, New York. At his uncle's invitation he had returned to this area of his childhood so that he might attend the school. Two learned professors there subsequently tutored him in Greek and Hebrew. Constant study in the years that followed, snatched at odd intervals from an unusually busy schedule of preaching and evangelism, built on this background. Even at fifteen years of age he was better posted on the Bible than many ministers—or so some later claimed.

Ordination and ministry

Not surprisingly he was drawn into preaching—first at Chateaugay, New York, in 1848 and then, for nearly six years, in northern New York and neighboring Canada West. He was ordained to the Christian ministry at a conference of Adventist believers in Chateaugay, September 21, 1851. Elder D.T. Taylor assisted at the service. Not long thereafter Sheldon began to labor in New England, particularly in western Massachusetts. Here, at Sturbridge, he met his future wife, Miss Areli Stone, daughter of Millerite parents who had been forced out of the Baptist church because of their beliefs.

About a year and a half later the young Sheldons did what so many of their fellow New Englanders were doing at that time and moved west. Several of their Adventist friends had already moved to Minnesota Territory. The Sheldons followed them.

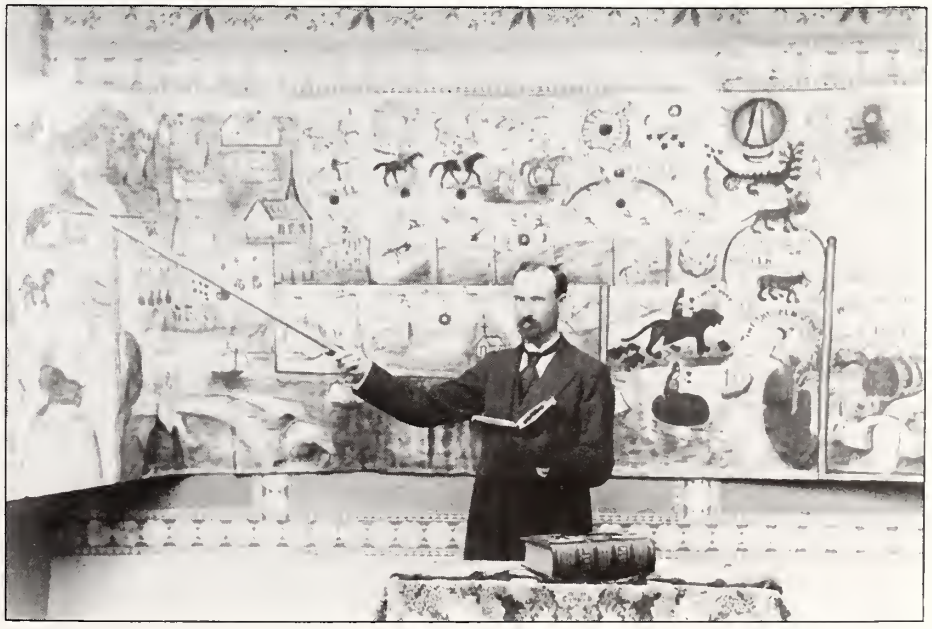
Time does not permit much further biographical presentation of the career of William Sheldon. (His family, be it said, eventually numbered four children of whom only the two daughters survived childhood.) Suffice it to say that despite evangelistic and other trips to New England, the South, California, Kansas and other Midwestern states, villages in Minnesota and Wisconsin were his home base thereafter. He established a home in Brodhead, Wisconsin, in the early 1870s and lived there until his death, on February 11, 1902, after seven years of extremely painful suffering from cancer.

Clear and careful prophetic exposition

Sheldon's fame as an Adventist rests upon, first, his pioneering efforts to spread the faith throughout the west and elsewhere; second, upon his fearless, persuasive preaching of the truth about Christ's coming and the nature of man, both in this life and in the next; third, upon his editorial work for and contributions to such periodicals as the *Bible Banner*, *Advent Christian Times* (sole editor for two years), *World's Crisis* (associated with Grant and Stockman) and as an associate editor of *Our Hope* from its inception. To the latter paper he contributed over 300 articles. And, then, fourth (and above all for this seminar) his stature with Advent Christians rested upon his clear and careful exposition of apocalyptic prophecy.

In the third volume of our series on Advent Christian history—a volume which, in part, will deal with our expansion across the country, I hope to say something about the sacrifice of health and safety which Sheldon, and others, too, underwent in their early years in the West. Indians and wild animals were a menace to him as, with knapsack full of books and tracts, he trudged hundreds of miles

Charts played a major role in early Advent Christian prophetic preaching.



on foot through uninhabited territory. On at least two occasions he all but lost his life in blinding snowstorms and falling temperatures. Later he could afford a horse and buggy and when he visited more settled areas in the East, South, and West Coast he could travel in the comparative luxury of the railroad cars. But, his early career is almost beyond the comprehension of late twentieth century Americans.

As a preacher and debater and, since he was so skillful at those professions, as a proselytizer, his presentations consisted of the scriptural, non-apocalyptic proofs for the personal soon coming of Christ and the biblical basis for conditional immortality with all its associated doctrines about hell, the intermediate state, heaven, and the like. In all such presentations Sheldon took positions generally accepted by Advent Christians since 1860 (and up to the present time).

His persuasiveness resulted not only from his close knowledge of the Bible in its historical setting and its original languages, but particularly from the clarity of his presentation. In an obituary tribute O.R. Jenks called him a writer of "unusual force and clearness." At about the same time, F.L. Piper editorialized in the *Crisis:*

As a writer, Bro. Sheldon possessed the rare faculty of always making himself understood...Where other expositors stirred up mud, and not infrequently confused honest seekers for the truth, Wm. Sheldon was always clear in his own apprehension of truth, and no question, seemingly, was too intricate or mystical to receive illumination from his tongue or pen.

The titles of a few of his forty-two tracts and books reveal some of the scope of his concern in such matters: "The Scriptural Doctrine of Eternal Damnation," "The Disembodied State Examined," "What is the Soul?" "Immortality: or Does Death Kill?" "Materialism as Related to the World to Come," "Ghostology" and "A Sermon on Hell." Among his hundreds of periodical articles were many to the same subject matter.

A common-sense approach

As an exponent of symbolic, or apocalyptical, prophecy Sheldon spoke and wrote with equal fervor and remarkable clarity, especially when one considers the frequent abstruseness of the prophetic imagery with which he was dealing. As Frederick L. Piper described it in 1904 "He had the courage of his convictions,and for him to be convinced, was also to give his testimony,and this he faithfully did."

For example, as early as 1856 he employed frank language in excoriating a favorite Millerite computation of the prophetic periods of Daniel based on an application of the words to Habakkuk, "Write down the revelation and make it plain on tablets so that a herald may run with it. For the revelation awaits an appointed time; it speaks of the end and will not prove false. Though it linger, wait for it; it will certainly come and will not delay" (Hab. 2:2, 3).

Millerites had early applied these words as a prophecy given primarily to their own day with Habakkuk's "tables" being their own charts. This, they felt was being followed by a tarrying time, i.e., the years since 1844.

To Sheldon this was patent nonsense. First, Habakkuk was commanded to write the vision *himself*, not to prophesy that someone else in a distant period would do it. Second, he was commanded to write *the* vision (the one he had just seen of the Lord raising up the Chaldeans) and not *a* vision to be given sometime in the future. Third, he was commanded to write *the vision* (sing.) and not the two visions of Daniel's 1290 and 1335

Golden Streets

Golden streets — and mansions, —
I'm sure it will not matter much
When we shall greet the King.
To be with Him,
To breathe the blissful air
Of His eternity,
To greet old friends and loved ones,
To join with them in timeless praise,
To find the tasks that He has called us to, —
Prepared us for, —
Will give us loveliness enough,
And life,
And love, His love, His endless love.

—James Asa Johnson

The "Gospel Wagon" was one of many innovative methods used by nineteenth century Advent Christians to proclaim the soon return of Jesus Christ.

days—given 93 years later—nor any other visions (pl.). And as to the claim of some Millerites that the tarrying time of Hebrews 10:37 referred to Habakkuk's "tarrying time," Sheldon simply pointed out that the text refers to Christ's not tarrying rather than to a vision not being delayed.

This seems common-sensical in its careful attention to grammatical details seemingly ignored by early expositors and is typical of much of Sheldon's interpretation.

Even in considering the apocalyptic statements of Revelation he projects a common sense approach to the application of those symbols to what is known of the history of mankind and the unfolding plan of God for His people. This is particularly clear in his tract on "The Thousand Years of the Dragon's Bondage, [etc.]." In this he projects an "amillenial" interpretation of the time of the thousand years—although he does not use the term.

"Let the chronological and prophetical wheels run in harmony, and the great chronological clock will tell the time." So wrote Sheldon in the preface to his 188-page book, *Chronology and Prophecy Made Plain*. Because he felt that one cannot hope to understand prophecy in its unfolding fulfillment without a reliable chronology of world events and particularly of the Hebrew and early Christian peoples, Sheldon undertook to compile such a list.

One can hardly imagine a more detailed, complete, or scholarly effort. Events are dated from solar and lunar eclipses (nearly all recalculated by Sheldon). Records of modern, older secular,and religious historians, even Chinese records, are correlated. Differences resulted from differing time systems are taken into consideration—the Nabonassid, Greek, and Roman eras, Sabbatic cycles, and many more. Even minor differences in eclipse times resulting from lunar irregularities and different refraction rates (for the sun's rays in the earth's atmosphere) are allowed for. So are many, many other details.

I cannot argue for the absolute correctness of Sheldon's chronology, especially since it has the 6,000 years of human history ending in 1883 (or at the most 1905), but I would argue for the depth of scholarship of the man, for his great attention to detail, and for his obvious sincerity. His dating of the events of Hebrew history must be close to accuracy and, hence, helpful to Bible scholars amongst us.

"A denominational Man"

Thus we have, in small part, William Sheldon, "a denominational man," to characterize him in words once written about him by both Elder E.A. Stockman and Dr. H.E. Thompson. Since Sheldon lived and died before any effective, or partially effective, national denominational organization had been devised, Stockman's and Thompson's characterization must have been in tribute to those aspects of his life which justified the designation—his commitment to distinctive Advent Christian truths, his long and effective promulgation of them, his geographically widespread devoted service to the people who held those truths, and his editorial and other leadership positions in the Eastern and Midwestern regions.

In 1871, only twenty years after his ordination to the Advent Christian ministry and with three decades of service ahead of him, Sheldon was described by I. C. Wellcome as "an earnest worker in what he undertakes." In an evaluative comment that is so typical of his writing, historian Wellcome then adds "he is an original thinker, and doubtless

makes some mistakes and imbibes some errors. Who does not?" Then, without reservation, Elder Wellcome concludes, "But he has been instrumental in the hand of the Lord of getting much light and truth among the people, and we hope he may be guided in the path of righteousness and gain the eternal rest when Jesus comes and gathers his flock."

As we have noted earlier, Sheldon was guided in the "path of righteousness." So much so that upon the occasion of his death on February 11, 1902 Adventist poet James A. Libby, confidently wrote,

"And we have buried him beneath the snow;
But when the spring appears and flowerets blow,
Some shall be planted o'er his grave,
Foretokening
That in after years, when Christ shall come in power,
What we have sown in dust, an earthly seed,
Shall rise a heavenly flower." □

A former Professor of History at Aurora University, Clyde E. Hewitt is author of Midnight and Morning *and* Responsibility and Response, *the first two of seven projected volumes dealing with Advent Christian History.*

DANIEL THOMPSON TAYLOR

Oral Collins

Daniel T. Taylor was born in 1823 in a small Lake Champlain town in New York State near the Quebec border called Rouses Point. His father, whose name he bore, held the office of county judge, and was a frequent spokesman on public issues in the community. His mother, Mary Jains, was the daughter of Captain Aaron and Tirzah Smith of Athol, Massachusetts. He was one of six children. His writing skills suggest that he had an exceptional mind and received a good education.

Daniel was converted to the Christian faith and joined the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1841. In 1843, he heard the Adventist message, was convinced that Christ was soon to come, and about a year later changed his affiliation to "Second Adventist." For two years he taught school in Vermont, then he responded to the Divine call to preach, doing evangelistic work in Quebec with Elder Levi Dudley. With Charles Dow, in June of 1848, he was ordained by the Second Advent Conference in Caldwell's Manor, Canada East (Quebec). His certificate (the original preserved in the Adventist Collection of Berkshire Christian College) was written by the eminent Millerite, Josiah Litch, and signed as well by Richard Hutchinson and Henry Buckley.

A passion for writing and research

Taylor's passion for scholarly pursuits began to flower during those early years, as early as April, 1845, when his first article, on the 2300 days of Daniel 8:14, appeared in *The Voice of Truth* (Joseph Marsh, Rochester, N.Y.). In mid-1851, he moved to Boston, perhaps better to research what was to be not only his first book but his magnum opus. (The book, *The Voice of the Church*, first published by H.L. Hastings in April 1855, went through several editions and sold well over 12,000 copies.) While in Boston he earned the respect and friendship of William Miller's associate and editor of the *Advent Herald*, Joshua V. Himes, and served for a time as associate pastor in his Chardon Street church.

On October 27, 1851, young Daniel married his life-long devoted spouse, Maria Augusta Smith of Wardsboro, Vermont. The following spring, he returned to the Champlain region to enter upon an evangelistic ministry. A superb, Spirit-gifted preacher with a rare combination of didactic and rhetorical skills, he was compelling and always in demand throughout his lifetime of ministry.

One of Taylor's meetings was in Waterbury, Vermont. There, he was prevailed upon to stay as pastor, where he served until early 1854. That fall, he took up a second pastorate in Worcester. During these early years, in which he was

constantly preaching and carrying on effective pastoral work, D.T. Taylor wrote and published about seventy-five items in various papers, plus several minutes and reports of conferences at which he was appointed secretary, and many obituaries of parishioners, loved ones, and friends. Most of these are on prophetic themes and many are extended, technical expositions of chronological questions or apocalyptic texts. He continued to write throughout a lifetime ministry, leaving his record of clipped articles pasted in chronological order in a scrapbook and a fourteen-volume "journal." Taylor characteristically tackled the hard questions, researching and documenting extensively. Every line was eagerly received and published by the editors of several Adventist papers, as well as local and city newspapers. He even made inroads with his ecological and astronomical calculations into the prestigious though unappreciative *Scientific American*.

He avidly collected bibliographic resources to aid his research and developed elaborate historical and statistical studies. His extraordinary library and his encyclopedic knowledge of many things were sources of wonder to neighbors in his community. On three occasions, at a time when his denomination had no depository library, he contributed major collections of Adventist books or periodicals to the Worcester Antiquarian Society, an extraordinary precaution for a man whose life was devoted to the expection of the near return of Christ. These materials now constitute a rare collection of now obscure Millerite papers, broadsides, pamphlets, and books, numbering in the hundreds. They continue to benefit scholars researching the Adventist movement.

A concern for people

The life of Adventist preachers has seldom been comfortable and Taylor's was no exception. With others of his clerical association, his earthly recompense afforded only a minimum of amenities. Only the devotion of friends J.V. Himes, H.L. Hastings, and a few concerned parishioners sustained his needs. Soon after his arrival in Worcester, there appeared a notice repeated in kind at critical times throughout his life, offering for rent or sale his cottage home on the lake shore at Rouses Point. The extent of his poverty as well as his detachment from even his most prized possessions is illustrated by such notices which often put up for sale major sections of his library (with the suggestion that the purchaser might well contribute them to some research collection).

Taylor proved to be an effective pastoral administrator. A Worcester parishioner published this testimony: "After each brother and sister found their proper place to labor, the church then saw her strength and prevailed with God. She was of one heart and mind to labor for the salvation of souls, and the result has been glorious. Thirty-six have been baptized at the hand of brother Taylor. Twenty-four of them this cold winter (1857), on one occasion breaking through ice two feet in thickness. He buried them in the likeness of Christ's death, and raised them in the likeness of his resurrection...Brother Taylor is indeed a pastor and teacher. The longer he is with us the more we love him..." (*Journal* 2.94). This pastorate lasted, however, only till June of 1858.

In February of 1860, D.T. Taylor published an important statistical report of Adventism, upon the basis of which he estimated a total of 150,000 Second Adventists and 550 ministers actively engaged in the Adventist movement. The study was based on detailed questionnaries distributed to the ministers which gave opportunity for response on questions of doctrine as well as numbers and other distinctives of the work.

At this time, while only in his forties, Taylor's medical history reached crisis proportions. Inclined

We Will Be Stunned

Men will be working at their million jobs,
Dating and drinking,
Doing the tasks of everyday,
And, suddenly,
The earth will change
And time will be no more.

We will be stunned, I'm sure,
Astonished,
When we pass so suddenly from all we know as Time
To His eternity.

—James Asa Johnson

to various ailments, he had been served by many doctors and was described by one (who had an aversion to medicinal cures) as "a walking apothecary shop." This doctor, Dr. J.C. Jackson, ran a water-cure infirmary, where Daniel spent a year in the middle of his career being purged of various patent medicines. During most of this time, Mrs. Taylor was with him, much of their expense being born by monies raised from anonymous friends through the agency of H.L. Hastings. Taylor had been unable to continue preaching and was during his period of treatment required to refrain from serious study and from writing more than occasional inspirational material.

The Advent Christian Church was built around the ministry of publications. Publications like the World's Crisis, the Messiah's Advocate, and others touched many with the message of Christ's second coming.

A gift of poetry

One of D.T. Taylor's gifts was writing inspirational poetry. His rhythmic verse was extraordinary and widely praised. Perhaps as much as one-quarter of his literary production was of this kind, his compositions frequently celebrating some particular event, whether the death of a loved one or a battle involving the local troops of the Champlain. Perhaps no better example can be put here than that found in our Advent Christian Hymnal (though the two starred stanzas are there omitted):

Lift your glad voices in triumph on high;
Shout for the day of redemption is nigh;
Sing, for the Lord will appear in his glory,
Mountains and valleys repeat the glad story;
Tune ev'ry lyre, Lift the strain higher,
Far o'er the ocean the tidings shall fly.

Lift your glad voices ye nations and sing;
Let the high anthem re-echo and ring,
Sing, for the bright One that slept in the manger comes;
and the earth that once pillow'd a stranger,
In rich adorning, Hails the glad morning, Blossoms like Eden, and welcomes her King.

Lift your glad voices he conquered the grave,
Jesus, Immanuel, Almighty to save.
Shout to the tyrant, "Thy chains are all broken;"
Sing, for the voice of Jehovah hath spoken,
"Open the portal, Make them immortal;
Life shall endure with Eternity's wave."

*Lift your glad voices, your banner unfurl,
Sin, death, and hell shall to ruin be hurled;
Christ shall come down in his chariot of fire,
Bethlehem's beauty and Israel's Messiah;
Prince ever glorious, Strong and victorious,
Lion of Judah and King of the world.

Lift your glad voices he cometh again,
Sound out the tidings o'er earth and o'er main!
Sing, for the dark days of evil are ending:
Shout to the Bridegroom with angels descending,
Bride of Jehovah, Welcome thy Lover,
Sing, for he cometh, he cometh, to reign!

*Lift your glad voices wide under the sun;
Sing of his power who the vict'ry has won;
Strong is the arm that the strengthless defended,
Saved us from hell, and the warfare hath ended.
Hallelujah, again, Hallelujah, Amen!

Shout, for the work of redemption is done."

"Lift Your Glad Voices" was first published in the *World's Crisis* in March, 1865, together with an appeal by the editor for someone to supply an appropriate tune. The hymn is "too good to be left where it is"! With that we agree.

Return to Rouses Point

Taylor began another effective pastorate in Castleton, Vermont, beginning in April, 1862. But again crisis overtook him, as he felt compelled in April, 1864, to return to Rouses Point to care for his aged, dying mother, suffering from "slow gangrene." One of his most touching compositions, "Filial Affection," an excerpt from which follows, reflects both his impeccable principles and his compassion in this difficult situation:

"Look upon her. Look lovingly into her eyes. Speak kindly in her ears. She has had enough to bear in this world. She is *your* mother. Cause her no tears nor sadness...You can lose but *one* mother...At her bedside you may learn such lessons of patience as you can learn nowhere else. Within hearing of her groans you may learn how to suffer, and do, and die if needs be, for poor humanity. The house of affliction may prove as the refiner's fire. It is Christ's school for the perfecting of his chosen..Smother not for a moment the claims of filial affection; take good care of dear mother. Her chair and bed will one day be vacant. The murmuring lips will be solemnly still..."

Taylor's mother lingered on six years until her death on May 10, 1870. During this period, Taylor concentrated on writing and occasional evangelistic preaching. In August of 1866 he was appointed Corresponding Editor for the *Crisis*. His pen flourished, filling an entire volume of his "journal" (vol. 6) with clippings of one production year, after which he terminated that appointment. Later, in 1876, he served for a year the same role for the *Bible Banner*.

Taylor was regarded with great respect by the editors of the major papers. On one occasion, he warned them of "the danger of [their] getting prosy, slow, dull, insipid, and lackadasical. Danger of losing their early fire and snap, of parting with their once absorbing, soul-felt interest in the magnificent theme. Danger of writing too lengthy articles and of falling into dead, commonplace ways. The times need essays wide-awake, charged with condensed thought, paced with calm power, and written with burning words. Our post is peculiar. It is one of sounding a continual alarm. Live men at such a post will not dole out monotonous signals, but shout a perpetual alarm. Put the trumpet to your lips, O watchman, and give no uncertain sound. "If we have whispered truth, whisper no longer; speak as the trumpet does, sterner and stronger" (*Journal* 11, Jan. 17, 1878).

During this interval with the care of his dying mother, the Taylors also lost an only child, an infant son at eighty days, Sept. 25, 1868. With his forced confinement, Taylor became more settled in the Champlain community, serving several offices and wrote a history of the Champlain region, most of which appears never to have been published. He published many historical articles, however, as well as other items in local papers, especially in the *Plattsburgh Sentinel* and the *Champlain Journal*. He was received interdenominationally and preached in many non-Adventist pulpits. He later did a year-long acting pastorate in the Congregational Church of St. Albans, Vermont, where he received a unanimous call to be regular pastor, but declined. During this period it was reported that "every religious interest in the community has been revived" (*Journal* 9.1, May 7, 1975).

Final years in Hyde Park

In October of 1880, D.T. Taylor auctioned off his possessions in Rouses Point and moved to Hyde Park, Massachusetts, where he was to spend the rest of his life. In 1891, the second of his major works, *The Great Consummation and the Signs that Herald Its Approach*, was published by the Advent Christian Publication Socity of Boston. In addition to these, he wrote and published many smaller books and pamphlets, including the following, in chronological order:

- *The Voice of Warning from the Four Winds.* 22 pp. Dec. 1854.
- *Science and the Resurrection.* Yarmouth, Me.: Scriptural Publication Society, 1872.
- *The Increase of Crime: An address delivered before the World-wide Prayer Union at Camp Hebron, Mass., Aug. 11, 1886.* Boston: American Millennial Association, 1886. 32 pp.
- *The Coming Glory; an address delivered before the World-wide Prayer Union at Camp Hebron, Mass., July 19, 1888. Boston: American Millennial Association. 40 pp.*
- *Chariots of Fire and Iron; the cars in prophecy and history with the wonders of rapid traveling and significance of the modern railway system, a token of the nearing end of the age.* Yarmouth, Me.: Scrip-

tural Publication Society, 1888. 168 pp.

•*Premillennialism: Its Character, Condition, and Prevalence in the Christian Church;* an address delivered before the Young Minister's Union in Boston, Mass., Nov. 18, 1891. Boston: Advent Christian Publication Society. 32 pp.

•*The Coming Throne.* Yarmouth, Me.: Scriptural Publication Society, 1892.

•*Israel in Prophecy and History,* Boston: Advent Christian Publication Society, 1893. 100 pp.

•*The Literal and the Spiritual in Biblical Interpretation;* an address delivered in Italian Music Hall, Boston, June 13, 1892. Boston: American Millenial Association, 1893. 19 pp.

The following, undated, in alphabetical order:

The Age of Murder
The Burning of Rome
The Coming Earthquake
Few Saved
New Heavens and New Earth
The Undesirableness of Death
Voice of Warning

Daniel Thompson Taylor died in November of 1899, after a protracted illness. The editor of the *Crisis* stated in his death notice the following: "No man among us could give better information on Bible topics than he...Nothing passed in the scientific world that had any bearing upon Scripture which was allowed to escape his attention without exploration...He carefully traced the divine mind in its faithful fulfillment of what it had promised, even in what seemed to most men of no importance. Possessed of a fine brain he pressed to completion the divine purpose, what the common mind paused not to consider...So long as he was able, with tongue or pen, he poured forth, in his *inspiring* prose or rapturous poetry, for the encouragement of all who was waiting in faith for his appearing, the message of his life."

D.T. Taylor's death notice appeared in the *World's Crisis,* Nov. 15, 1889, p. 8; an obituary in the issue of Nov. 22, 1899, p. 1; a "sketch of his life" in the issue of Jan. 20, 1904. A fitting tribute to his extraordinary literary achievement is found in the book, *Gathered Gems,* a selection from the great volume of his work brought together by W.H. Mitchell in a book of 288 pages and published in the year of his death by the Advent Christian Publication Society.

Taylor's major works

The Voice of the Church in All Ages concerning the Coming and Kingdom of the Redeemer; or, The Reign of Christ on Earth was later published in a revised and somewhat expanded edition under the lead title, *The Reign of Christ on Earth.* When the book appeared, it was lauded by nearly all reviewers of whatever persuasion for its scholarly, well-written, accurate, and useful treatment of the subject. Even those unsympathetic with its theme gave it courteous recognition. Those who had a ready ear found it inspiring reading and responded enthusiastically.

Scholars of the twentieth century who have known the work still give it praise. The late Wilbur M. Smith, the eminent bibliographer of Fuller and Trinity Theological Seminaries stated in his *A Preliminary Bibliography for the Study of Prophecy* (Wilde, 1952) that it was at that time "the most exhaustive history of the doctrine of the second advent of our Lord ever to be written in the English language, and probably better than any written in any other language." Roger Nicole, Emeritus Professor of Theology at Gordon-Conwell Seminary, made a similar statement in my hearing when I was a student at the seminary. Today, we have the Seventh-day Adventist, Le Roy Froom's four volume *Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers* which surpasses Taylor in its exhaustive (and exhausting) treatment, but it cannot duplicate the experience of reading Taylor's work.

The Voice of the Church traces the history of the doctrine of the premillennial Advent of Christ

Another Day Like This

Another day like this,
But with no ending
And no night,
For He will come again
Whose right it is to reign
Eternally.
The clouds will be rolled back,
And serried ranks of angels
Will greet the coming back
That is His promise to His own.

Another day like this, —
Perhaps today, —
The Lord will come again,
Eternal King!

—James Asa Johnson

from the period of the "Jewish Church" to Taylor's time in the nineteenth century. In Taylor's day, premillennialism was seen as the antidote to the popular postmillennial view. Whereas postmillennialism looked for a spiritual millennium in the Church Age to be ushered in by human ecclesiastical means, premillennialism championed the literal near return of Christ and the restitution of the Kingdom of God on earth. Whereas postmillennial doctrine for many engendered lethargy, premillennial teaching confronted the sinner with imminent judgment and the saint with imminent reward. It focused on the second coming of Christ. No Advent Christian seeking understanding of the prophetic Word can afford to be ignorant of this book.

The Great Consummation, and the Signs that Herald Its Approach offers a systematic presentation of Taylor's eschatology. It has broader significance because it was to a large degree centrist in representing the main stream thinking of the leading Adventists of the later nineteenth century. The introductory chapter focuses on the return of Christ, then the following subjects are treated successively: God's wrath on the Jews, the Abomination of Desolation, the Great Tribulation, the signs of Christ's Advent, the fears of science, the beginning of "all these things," and the Consummation. In passing, Taylor offers his understanding of all the major eschatological prophecies and weaves them into a systematic whole. The book offers an important orientation for study in the late twentieth century when we must decide what to preserve and what to revise of our prophetic heritage. □

A member of the Advent Christian History Task Force, Oral Collins is Professor of Biblical Studies at Berkshire Christian College. He is also curator of the college library's Adventist collection.

SUSIE DAVIS

Freeman Barton

Susie W. Davis was born in Ronova, Pennsylvania in 1884. She was raised in Everett, Massachusetts and after a long life of service died in 1965. She raised a family, pastored, lectured, wrote, and administered churches, camp-meetings, and a mission society. With her husband, Frank, she formed one of the most illustrious teams in the history of the Advent Christian Church.

She was selected by me as one to be featured in our seminar for a number of reasons, both personal and logical. She was a prominent lecturer on prophecy, and women should not be neglected on an occasion like this one. She began her public ministry in west central New Hampshire, not far from my boyhood home. Her general approach to prophetic interpretation is particularly congenial to me.

The primary reason for choosing her is that she was the mother of one to whom I dedicate this brief presentation. Edna Amnott, unlike her parents, is not one to minister publicly. She is quiet, reserved, serious looking. She is also deeply spiritual, insightful, compassionate, generous, and she has a beautiful smile and sense of humor beneath that serious surface. Few know the significance of her service to Berkshire Christian College over two decades.

Prophetic interpretation

The chief source of information on Susie Davis' prophetic interpretation is a collection of her notes called *Among the Candlesticks* published by Richard Polk in 1977. Keep in mind that it contains simple popular sermons, not scholarly lectures. The notes are not complete, they are obscure at points (she rejects all current millennial options and hints that the thousand years comes between Constantine and the French Revolution), and they are sometimes inconsistent (she gives two different explanations of 666). Nevertheless, the general direction of Davis' interpretation is clear and helpful.

Advent Christians have almost always been historicist, rather than preterist or futurist, in their prophetic interpretations. The historicist school, however, still permits a good deal of variety.

Davis' interpretation was a reaction to the more specific historicism of, for example, Miriam McKinstry. McKinstry associated every eyelash, toenail, and gush of bad breath with some specific name, place, or date. Advances in historical scholarship soon outdated her interpretations. Davis objected to McKinstry's assumption that a person had to be a scholar in order to understand the Bible.

Davis took a more general approach. "Do not attempt to fix dates or historical persons. Later developments may shed new light" (page v). "I believe each generation has seen that which was a fulfillment of the basic elements and each generation has thought it might be living in the end of the age. This is as it should be" (page vi).

Three principles

Mrs. Davis presents three basic common sense principles for interpreting prophecy.

- There is a purpose that connects the several elements together, which follows regular, definite and intelligible rules and usages, known or knowable to men.
- The symbol and that which it represents must correspond, i.e., actors equal actors; actions equal actions. There is a similar correspondence of relations, character, peculiarities, time, and soon.
- When a new symbolism is introduced, especially in the apocalyptic prophecies, a verbal explanation is usually given (p. vii).

She argues against continuous historicism and the year-day theory. She states concerning the forty-two months, "Here again we need not be troubled if we cannot pinpoint every detail. God has a fixed time for everything. The power of evil is limited. The end will come" (p. 1).

The "woman" in Rev. 12 is identified as neatly as I've seen anywhere—"that portion of the human race which recognizes the one true God" (p. 24). The dragon is Satan, the manchild Christ. In ch. 13 the beast from the earth is "the symbol of imperial pagan government, which is and always has been, the visible agency of Satan on earth" (p. 31). The wounded sixth head is the Roman empire. The beast from the sea (false prophet) is the Roman Catholic church.

Mrs. Davis' approach has some weaknesses. Most important for a historicist position is that it pays too little attention to history. John's readers knew the historical situation, with its problems which this letter was intended to meet. We too must know their situation as fully as possible (just as with Philippians or Acts) if we are going to understand the book fully. It's not *quite* as simple as Davis maintains.

The first weakness leads to a second—spiritualizing or what is sometimes called the homiletic approach. She says, for example, "Babylon [ch. 17] is the symbol of apostate Christendom" (p. 36). The mark of the beast is "A spiritual impress of materialism or worldly mindedness" (p. 33). These applications may be proper, but the historical meaning needs to be established first.

Her approach also has strengths. By seeing big pictures more than details one can get the main lessons of prophecy without being a great scholar.

She avoids forcing symbols to fit situations and events, past, present, or future. Also, she recognizes the apocalyptic nature of numbers, and she does not use them to establish time tables. □

An early women's meeting. The Woman's Home and Foreign Mission Society organized to enable Advent Christians to proclaim Christ's return in countries throughout the world.

Freeman Barton is Director of Library Resources at Warner Southern College in Lake Wales, Florida.

EDWIN KEMBLE GEDNEY

David A. Dean

Few individuals have achieved distinction in as many different spheres as Edwin K. Gedney. His accomplishments were recognized equally in the sciences of geology, psychology, and theology. His ministry achieved success equally in the local pastorate, the Christian college, denominational administration, overseas missions, and church planting. He was equally at home within Advent Christian circles and interdenominational cooperative effort. Whether in South Africa, the United States, Japan, or India, E.K. Gedney worked skillfully with people and demonstrated keen insight into the dynamics of any situation.

We cannot consider Dr. Gedney's significance as a prophetic writer, then, without first observing the larger framework in which he functioned.

Ed Gedney's major professional contribution was through his service to Gordon College in Massachusetts. He began his career in the department of science in 1934. His academic background in geology was soon eclipsed by his gifts and aptitudes in other fields. After continuing graduate study in psychology at Harvard University, Edwin Gedney organized new departments of psychology and education at Gordon before becoming chairman of its division of Christian education. He often took special assignments, demonstrating a genius for analyzing and solving institutional problems. His own accomplishments elevated the prestige of our denomination among New England evangelicals.

Edwin K. Gedney's impact on the Advent Christian people was profound and lifelong. As a graduate student at prestigious Brown University, he met Dr. Irving F. Barnes, then pastor of the Providence, Rhode Island Advent Christian Church, through whom he came into our denomination. Dr. Barnes' scholarly presentations assisted Ed Gedney to accept quickly our belief in Christ's return, "Immortality through Christ alone," and the sleep of the dead.

During most of his service to the Advent Christian cause, Dr. Gedney lived in New England. He served Berkshire Christian College as a part-time teacher and as a member of its Board of Regents for thirty years (many of them as chairman). He pastored Advent Christian churches in Somerville and Melrose Highlands, Massachusetts. He served actively in the Massachusetts Conference, Alton Bay Campmeeting Association, the Eastern Regional Association (where in 1978 he became its first director of Church Growth), and the Advent Christian General Conference of America (of which he was president for 8 years). A man of vision with a gift for analyzing situations and evaluating the past, Dr. Gedney pioneered in the development of our United Budget, denominational reorganization, and the relocation of denominational headquarters to Charlotte, North Carolina. He was a knowledgeable historian of Adventism and an astute observer of all its activities.

Dr. Gedney's interest in Christian education did not restrict the scope of his vision. He advised the American Advent Mission Society often in the processing of prospective missionaries. Twice he served in Japan for extended periods, teaching and advising our missionaries there. He visited each of our mission fields at least once.

Gedney's prophetic contribution

By the close of his life, Dr. Gedney established himself as a capable prophetic speaker. He had earlier spoken at the "Boston Meetings" and the Prophetic Conferences often held there. He traveled throughout New England giving prophetic lectures and sermons. On at least one occasion, he lectured before a packed house at the Eastern Regional Association Convention, employing a large and colorful prophetic chart.

He prepared two extensive prophecy tracts which were printed and circulated by the Southern Advent Christian Association. And he wrote occasionally on prophecy for the *Advent Christian Witness.* But, his most significant work in the field is embodied in his two volume *A Primer of Prophecy,* published by Advent Christian Publications in 1964.

Dr. Gedney was not especially "original" in matters of prophetic interpretation, but he possessed the scholarly skills and the historical sense to be independent. So it is

that his work promotes a number of positions which follow in the Advent Christian prophetic tradition. At the same time, he refused to be bound by that tradition and certainly he declined to agree totally with any previous thinkers.

Emphasis upon Historicism

Edwin K. Gedney was dismayed by inroads into Advent Christian thinking being made by the popular works of Hal Lindsay and other dispensational-futurist writers. He knew well the noble history of historicist interpretation and understood the roots of futurism and preterism in the Counter Reformation by the Roman Catholic Church. He made it one of his goals to teach the differences between the different systems of prophetic interpretation (preterist, historicism, futurism, and spiritualizing) and to help Advent Christians appreciate the strengths of their own historicist approach.

Dr. Gedney's own brand of historicism was broad and general, for he was not in this area dogmatic. Whereas some historicists have sought to identify the minute details of prophecy with specific happenings in history, he chose rather to be more cautious and tentative on those details. "Experience should not cause us to reject prophecy but to proceed with its interpretation with greater caution, being ready to find security in that which has already been clearly fulfilled, to appraise the relation of current history to the Scriptures with as much objectivity as we can, and to leave much in a less crystallized status for future clarification" (*Primer*, I, p. 68). He was ready to be identified with historicism, but not with any one historicist system.

His commitment to historicism, though, is obvious in his treatment of the books of Daniel and Revelation. He proposes outlines of them both and holds that they are best viewed as a pre-writing of history. He goes into greater detail on the significance of Daniel (see his Table 1 in *A Primer of Prophecy*, "A Comparison of the Great Historical Prophecies of Daniel"), and sees the Revelation from a progressive parallel historicist viewpoint (*Primer, II, 104*).

Another aspect of publication work was tract distribution. In the age before television and radio, tracts were an innovative way to proclaim the word of Christ's soon coming.

Emphasis upon Christ's return

For Dr. Gedney, the Second Coming of Christ was the great prophetic truth. "The church may disagree markedly about the various aspects of the appearing of Antichrist without loss, but the dramatic appearing of Christ in visible bodily form with great glory and power is its only hope and should never be obscured or devitalized by human speculation" (*Ibid.*, I, p. 71). The focus of both the Old Testament and of the Gospels is nothing other than the coming of Jesus, the Messiah (*Ibid.*) and that should be our focus as well.

He emphasized often that, whereas many prophecies were obscure to us and their historical fulfillments subject to disagreements, prophecies of Christ's Return were powerfully clear. If God has made them so clear, we ought to do the same in our preaching and teaching.

His greatest contribution

This leads me to suggest what I think was E.K. Gedney's greatest prophetic contribution to our group. His greatest impact (and I think his greatest intended impact) was on the values and attitudes of our people. He did all that he could to revive a declining interest in prophetic study and urged our people to resume their own searching of the prophetic scriptures. To this end, he taught us the differences

between various types of prophetic interpretation and showed us how to discriminate among the alternate views on the Millennium. He also outlined and explained axioms and rules for study of the Bible predictions (*Primer*, I, pp. 69ff).

He taught us to keep the Return of Christ central and to understand all that the Bible taught us about it, holding this Advent Hope with confidence. But, on the lesser questions of prophecy he taught us the importance of a humble and tolerant spirit concerning our conclusions. In both cases, he would have been quite happy for us just to follow his example.

Major writing by E.K. Gedney:

Primer of Prophecy, two volumes. Concord, NH: Advent Christian Publications, Inc., 1964. (now available from Venture Bookstore, P.O. Box 23152, Charlotte, NC 28212).

A Preliminary Survey of Vocational Opportunities in the Protestant Christian Work-Field. Boston: The Gordon College Press, 1948.

We Believe: A Biblical Anthropology (with Neil H. Braun and Austin Warriner), Osaka, Japan: Japan Advent Christian Mission, 1978. □

A member of the Task Force on Advent Christian History. Dr. David A. Dean is Professor of Theology at Berkshire Christian College.

EARL WATERMAN

Robert C. Hewitt

Earl Waterman is a choice Christian saint whom I love in the Lord. I feel honored to be able to number him, and to be numbered by him, as a personal friend.

Earl is a dynamic preacher, a faithful pastor, and one whom the Lord has greatly used to bring people to Himself.

One of the unique aspects of the Advent Christian Church has been our freedom "to agree to disagree," and Earl illustrates of that fact. Advent Christians are, and for the most part have always been, historicists in our understanding of prophecy. Earl used to be, but I can probably best describe him now as a "non-dispensational historical futurist," which makes him a typical expositor among us. And though I disagree with him at several points, I think that minority positions ought to be represented.

He immersed himself in Biblical prophecy

Earl was born in Attleboro, Massachusetts in 1912. He grew up, however, in St. Johnsbury, Vermont where he was converted in the Advent Christian Church and where he attended both the St. Johnsbury Academy and the St. Johnsbury Trade School. In addition, he went to high school in Attleboro, and attended the old New England School of Theology in Boston.

Because Earl went to N.E.S.T. during the Depression, he was not able to continue but had to leave and go to work. That leads him to describe himself as "nothing more than a fairly well-read layman." Earl is a good illustration of Dr. David A. Dean's statement in his recent book, *Framing the Prophetic Puzzle*, to the effect that you don't have to be a scholar to study and understand prophecy. Anyone who is willing to discipline himself can learn to read and understand its basic framework. Earl not only did that, but he has immersed himself in it through the years.

He was ordained to the Christian ministry by the New Hampshire Advent Christian Conference and subsequently pastored churches in Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont and in Clearwater, Florida. In addition, he so raised two sons that they followed in their father's footsteps, heard the call of God, and today are in the Advent Christian ministry. Evangelism is one of the burdens which God has put upon Earl's heart, and in pursuit of this part of his calling he has served as evangelist at churches and camp-meetings in twenty different states as well as in Canada.

For the last seventeen years, together with his wife Ethel, he has pursued his dream of developing a campground where people could go for needed rest and renewal in the Lord whether they could afford to pay for it financially or not. Harbinger Campground or Harbinger

Bible Conference of which he is both founder and director is the result. Imagine what it would mean if, for a moment, we could all be transported by angel van to Whitefield, New Hampshire, where Harbinger is located, and find ourselves seated in the sanctuary of the most recent building to be constructed, the tabernacle-dining room complex.

We would be looking toward the pulpit, flanked by piano and musicians, but our eyes would be carried to and through the clear glass wall behind to gaze out over the beautiful vista of God's handiwork in the White Mountains of New Hampshire. We would be lifted and transported in worship before the service ever began. I suspect as well that we would find ourselves agreeing one with another that we must have entered into at least a bit of "the promised land."

During the construction of the tabernacle, Earl was struck by falling lumber and suffered a severe injury which necessitated multiple surgery and left him crippled. Somewhat like Caleb of old, his vision for the future "is not one whit abated" but is stronger than ever. Let me share again that Earl is a sweet man of God whose life is a blessing to all who know him, in witness whereof he is affectionately known among his friends as "Earl, the Pearl."

Prophetic stance

As indicated earlier, Brother Earl has moved away from the general historicist position that has characterized us as a people. Among concepts which he *once* espoused but *now* rejects are these:

1. That the papal system (or, I think he would say, "any system") fits the picture of Antichrist described by Paul in Thessalonians and by John in Revelation. It has never, "denied that Jesus is the Christ";
2. That the great tribulation is all in the past, being the 1260 years of Roman domination in the ecclesiastical world;
3. That practically all prophetic signs have been fulfilled so that we wait only for the striking and breaking in pieces of the great image of Daniel 2 by the stone cut out of the mountain without hands;
4. That there is no special future for national Israel in God's plans;
5. That the celestial signs which are to proceed Christ's return have already taken place; or
6. That we cannot expect or look for any revival of great or particular significance in these last days.

Earl rather believes that if Christ is a person and not a system, then it logically follows that Antichrist must also be a person not a system (so, if I understand correctly, ruling out communism or any other "ism"). He argues that the Advent Christian Church was born upon the conviction of a real, personal, actual second appearing of the Lord Jesus Christ from heaven. This is a literal interpretation of prophecy. We have traditionally insisted on handling scripture about death in a literal fashion, and he wants to handle prophecy the same way whenever the context permits. He also believes:

1. In a latter day resurgence of Israel as the people of God which he finds in plain scriptural utterance. He would find Romans 11:25-27, as conclusive: "I do not want you to be ignorant of this mystery, brothers, so that you may not be conceited: Israel has experienced a hardening in part until the full number of the Gentiles has come in. And so all Israel will be saved, as it is written: "The delivered will come from Zion; he will turn godlessness away from Jacob. And this is my covenant with them when I take away their sins."

His Children All

When we shall meet before the Throne
It will not matter that we spoke
A different language,
That we used other words
To tell about our faith:
One thought will be in our hearts,
The joy of being there,
The joy of fellowship with Him
And with the saints and loved ones.

So many things divide us now
That will not matter then:
Why do we let them matter now
And separate us from each other?
We are united in His love,
His children all.

—James Asa Johnson

2. That a great time of trouble still confronts the world and the believer. Jesus clearly associated it with the extreme end of time: "Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the Heavens shall be shaken. And then shall appear the sign of the Son of Man in Heaven...and they shall see the Son of Man coming...(Matthew 24:29-50);

3. That in Revelation 19 and 20 the teaching of a literal millenium is clear and unmistakable and that only by spiritualizing can this conclusion be avoided. He would argue: In chapter 19 the *Heavens are opened,* the rider on the white horse appears, and white robed armies follow in His train. The rider is "The King of kings and Lord of lords." It is none other than the Son of God. The identification is beyond dispute. In chapter 20 *He is reigning*. Here he would find this quotation from 1 Corinthians 15 appropriate: "Then cometh the end when He shall have delivered up the Kingdom of God, even the Father, when He shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For He must reign till He hath put all enemies under His feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death...and when all things shall be subdued unto Him, then shall the Son also Himself be subject until Him that put all things under Him, that God may be all in all."

4. That two literal resurrections are announced in Revelation 20, and that when the same Greek terms are employed to describe them both it is illogical to interpret one as spiritual and the other as literal. He would go on to argue that this is the kind of interpretation our opposers use in denying the reality of death, and that it seems an unworthy departure from our traditional position to spiritualize in the middle of a literal hope of genuine resurrection.

At this point he takes a "pot shot" at my Dad, and so I want to quote him: "One of our most respected commentators regards the position of a literal millenium as 'carnalizing the Hope.' Yet did not Jesus say to His twelve followers that they would sit upon twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel? Did He not say that the saints would judge angels? If taken literally this is at least as 'carnalizing' as believing in a literal millenium."

A gracious Christian gentleman

Having included this quotation I also ought to include another, which demonstrates both the humility and the spirit of the man. He writes: "Bob — do whatever you want to with this. I find it very difficult to differ with your father on anything. You will have to chalk it up to ignorance. Much Christian love, Earl."

Now, as to what is going to happen in the Millenium, he is frank to say he doesn't know. Not much has been revealed. He does see Isaiah 65 as clearly being a millenial chapter: "For behold I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered...and I will rejoice in Jerusalem and joy in My people...there shall be no more thence an infant of days nor an old man that hath not filled his days: for the child shall die a hundred years old; but the sinner being a hundred years old shall be accursed." Earl agrees that there is no hope of a second chance being offered to anyone after Christ's return, but thinks this Scripture and a few others may suggest a first chance for some who previously had none. Whatever else, Earl believes that it will clearly be a time of judgment, of suppression of evil, and of vindicating the name of God.

Earl is quick to recognize the difficulties in his interpretation but is equally quick to point out that this is true of every position on this subject. He believes it safest to accept what he understands to be the plain

His Grace Will Be There

If He has planned another earth,
A planet where there could be life
Such as we know,
His grace will be there, surely,
His love,
Whether there may be men
Or not.
He will be God,
The God that we have known on earth,
And if He wishes life,
Such life as ours to be there,
His grace will certainly surround
His people there as here.

—James Asa Johnson

statements of Scripture though he is unable to resolve all its difficulties.

Lest he be misconstrued as a dispensationalist, Earl emphatically proclaims that: (1) the Bible does not teach him any secret two part coming in reference to the blessed one. The "Rapture" and the "Revelation" are one; and (2) there is no legitimate gap between the sixty-ninth and the seventieth week of Daniel 9 as loudly proclaimed by the dispensationalists.

A personal word

Let me conclude with a personal word from Earl: "In my seventy-fifth year I am still trying to learn, still open to more light. I do believe that Advent Christians have lost the ear of the people in constantly riveting attention on things that happened in the middle ages. No doubt there was some significance to the acts and decrees of Constantine and other emperors. But what has happened in this twentieth century transcends in importance all that has happened — politically — in the past centuries.

"As a people we have felt that we are living 'in the toenails of the Image' for at least a hundred years. We see no great significance in the events of these tremendous times.

"One does not have to be sensationalist to hold the newspaper in one hand and the Word of God in the other. *God has not outrun His program.* We're just beginning to get the measure of the words of Jesus; There shall be famines, pestilences, and earthquakes. We ought not to overlook the statement that this is just "the beginning of sorrows."

"We must continue to adjust—not our convictions—but our applications of the prophetic word. The path of the just is as a shining light, shining more and more unto the perfect day.

"I found Jesus in the Advent Christian Church. No one wants to see a resurgence of power and influence among our people more than I. I love the Advent Christian message and have sought to expound it for fifty years. I esteem it an honor to have been granted to stand in Advent Christian pulpits and proclaim "Behold the Lord cometh with ten thousand of His saints."

I wish all of you could meet Earl. One thing is sure. You would quickly come to love the man whether you agreed with him or not.

Robert Hewitt is senior pastor of the Kennebunk, Maine Advent Christian Church.

Moral Majority **Cont. from page 3**

Doing this takes us to a second, more difficult step. Christians must wrestle with two questions: "Are there laws and principles that govern our lives and our society that are true whether or not a person believes the Bible? Can Christians serve in government and exercise leadership in a democratic society in ways that will benefit all the citizens irregardless of their religious belief?"

Look back at Pat Robertson's unsuccessful campaign for the presidency. Did you notice Mr. Robertson did not carry a majority of the so-called evangelical vote and that his negative rating among Republican voters was one of the highest in memory? The reason? The majority of Christians and almost all non-Christians did not trust Pat Robertson to exercise leadership in such a way that would benefit the large diversity of people in a democratic society. Combined with an inability to express his political agenda in ways that would be compelling to non-believers as well as believers, that lack of trust led to fear and even hostility among the voters.

Much of evangelical political involvement during the last ten years can be summed up with a motto coined by Ed Dobson: "Ready, *fire*, aim." That's good for attracting attention, but if Christians want to halt the march of secularism, we'd better do our homework. We need to articulate Christian principles in ways understandable to the vast majority of citizens. We need a healthy appreciation of our democratic heritage.

And we need to live holy, Christlike lives. When Christians become active in government, politics, medicine, law, or any aspect of modern life; a strong commitment to a Christlike life is important not only in our goals but in the way we accomplish them. Righteous ideals and goals are no excuse for dishonest, unethical ways of accomplishing them.

What will the next ten years bring for Moral Majority, Evangelicals for Social Action, and other evangelical political interest groups? That depends on whether or not they can avoid becoming enslaved to secular political agendas as well as whether or not they articulate Christian principles in ways that appeal to the citizens of our democratic society. □

Bring back the joy of teaching Sunday school!

Do your teachers gain a special joy and satisfaction from teaching Sunday school?

Are they assured their class time is worthwhile, their lessons Biblically sound? Do they see students responding to Scripture?

They can! And the right Sunday school curriculum will help—Bible-in-Life curriculum.

Send for free samples, and see how Bible-in-Life can put joy back into teaching. With teaching guidance that's clear and thorough. Effective classroom helps that keep students interested and involved. And of course, solid Bible teaching that draws students to Christ.

Just fill out and mail the coupon below. There's no obligation to buy.

Free Sunday School Curriculum Samples
Check any or all departments below. No obligation to buy.

☐ Nursery ☐ K'grtn.
☐ Primary ☐ Pri.-Jr.
☐ Junior ☐ Jr. High
☐ Sr. High ☐ Adult

Name _____ Position _____

Church Name _____

☐ Church
☐ Home Address _____

City/State _____ Zip _____

☐ Church
☐ Home Phone No. _____/_____

DEPARTMENT OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION
ADVENT CHRISTIAN GENERAL CONFERENCE
P.O BOX 23152 CHARLOTTE, NC 28212

Caroline Michael
Director

I Thought I Could Handle It

Marion Facteau

"Watch out that no one deceives you," (Matthew 24:4).

I thought I was in control, I felt I could handle the situation and not let it drag me down. It's amazing how we let the voice of Satan deceive us!

When I first started working as a secretary to the assistant principal at the high school, I tried to be very selective in making friends. I didn't want to get into the wrong crowd and I really wanted to be a witness for the Lord to the teenagers and staff. The assistant principal was extremely friendly and compassionate when my son was sick and I felt I could talk on a spiritual level with him even though I knew he was not a Christian. I invited him to our church functions. He never came but I was doing what I was commanded to do.

Satan's voice of deception

I made friends with two of the secretaries and we became quite the trio. The language they used would get a little risque at times but usually they were careful around me. As time went by, they became less careful. Four-letter words became the norm and I became more uncomfortable. But I rationalized with myself (let Satan deceive me) that it was OK as long as I didn't join in with them.

Although I continued to share with them how the Lord had been good to me and about things I had learned in Bible study, I could not convince my friends to join me. It seemed the more I talked about the Lord, the further they slipped away. They did things behind my back that really bothered me; rumors would fly rampantly about them at school. Since I have a policy never to act on rumors, I would not accept what was said and did not believe them. I honestly felt that I needed to minister to them. After all, Christ ministered to the sinners.

I allowed myself to be in this situation for almost three years. My husband kept telling me how it was dragging me down. I told him he was mistaken. I knew I could handle it and not let it affect my spiritual life. Satan's little voice was deceiving me again.

As I think back, I can't remember what caused me to make the break from them. It wasn't a revelation from God; it wasn't an incident. I stopped eating lunch with them. I stopped socializing with them; I stopped seeking them out. In fact, it was about 2 weeks before I noticed the change in myself. I wasn't coming home from work in a grumpy mood. I actually looked forward to getting up in the morning. I couldn't wait to see the kids, to give them a hug, a smile, a word of encouragement.

About this same time, I started getting into Romans both in my private study and also with the Bible study group at church. In Romans 5:14 I read, "death reigned from the time of Adam to the time of Moses, even over those who did not sin." This verse really burdened my heart for all those who perished because of a lack of faith or knowledge of God. Once again my friends were on my mind. Had I failed them? Did I do the right thing in breaking away? Should I try again to bring them to a relationship with Christ? I almost listened to the wrong voice again. As I studied Romans 8:35-39, I found my answer. I had let myself become separated from God. I let myself be led away to a false security in friends. I would not do it again!

New doors opened

I was furious with myself that I could have been so deceived! I couldn't believe that I didn't listen to my husband as he had always been my spiritual sounding board. Satan had kept the truths so buried below all his lies that I couldn't hear what God and my husband were saying. I didn't really weigh what I was hearing; I didn't match it up with God's word.

Romans 8:28 says, "In all things God works for the good of those who love him." Through the separation from these friends God opened doors for a relationship with a beautiful Christian woman who had recently been hired by the school. We call each other and frequently ask for prayer support. We see each other on weekends for fellowship and sharing when time permits.

I pray for all my co-workers who

do not know the Lord, but I will never again become yoked in a relationship that does not reflect God's love and glory. □

Marion is church organist, Sunday school superintendent, co-director of a puppet ministry, and wife of Pastor William Facteau at Massena, New York. Beside her position as secretary to the Assistant Principal at Massena Central High School, she is a member of the Board of Directors of Can-am Youth Services (a drug/alcohol rehab center).

Women Walking, Worshiping, Working with our Master

The above title was the theme for the Southern Region WHFMS Convention at the Advent Christian Village. The keynote address by Pastor Lee Welkley of New Life Community Church in Jacksonville challenged the capacity audience to get out in the "asphalt jungle" where many are in great need and share the good news of our Savior with them. The Village Kitchen Band had provided a stirring concert prior to the message and the South Georgia and Florida Conference WHFMS hosted a reception to conclude the evening.

Former missionary to the Philippines Laura Putnam stimulated the delegates and guests at the morning session with her devotional thoughts. President Pomeroy Carter of the Advent Christian Village distributed the annual Village report and verbally highlighted accomplishments at the Village and future plans. WHFMS Regional President Eloise Robertson presented a substantial check as the region's project to Mr. Carter.

Director of Women's Ministries Caroline Michael narrated a slide travelogue of her African trip, provided an update on Advent Christian World Missions, and a report on national WHFMS. Former National WHFMS President Marian Wrigley installed these officers: President Eloise Robertson, Vice-president Ann Jackson, Secretary Ruby McLamb, Treasurer Jeanette Johnson, and Auxiliary Leaders Annie Page, Frances Adams, and Jeanette Page.

World Missions Evening

Lana Chaffin of Clendenin promoted a "missions" evening at Elmore Church in Charleston, WV recently. Director of Women's Ministries Caroline Michael narrated a slide travelogue of her African trip and

Bea McCamey, Lana Chaffin, Pastor Elswick, Betheleen Facemyer, Caroline Michael

provided an Advent Christian World Missions update. A large group came together from a half dozen of the surrounding churches.

Blackstone, Palmer, and Smith

Hazel Blackstone, Jane Palmer, Fern Smith

The trio of Hazel Blackstone, Jane Palmer, and Fern Smith from Lewiston, Idaho were the retreat leaders for the tenth annual WHFMS retreat for the women of the Western Washington Conference. Women of all ages met at the Coachman Inn on Whidbey Island in Puget Sound to explore the theme "Beauty Care of the Tongue" beginning Friday evening with "Tongue Olympics." Saturday's workshops were "Excerpts from a Journal," "Developing Good 'Oral' Hygiene," and "Different Folks with Different Strokes."

l. to r.—Barbara Schaeffner, Nancy Winslow, Eloise Robertson, Beatrice Moore, Betheleen Facemyer, Carole Lewis, Judy Tidwell, Caroline Michael, Dorothy Randolph.

WHFMS National Board Meets

Eight women from eight states met at the home of Caroline Michael, Director of Women's Ministries, in Charlotte for dinner and an informal evening before beginning their annual board sessions chaired by national WHFMS President Beatrice Moore. Others attending were Vice-president Dorothy Randolph, Clerk Judy Tidwell, and Regional Presidents Betheleen Facemyer, Carole Lewis, Barbara Schaeffner, Eloise Robertson, and Nancy Winslow.

Topics considered included progress and implementation of national WHFMS goals, programming for WHFMS and auxiliary groups, publications and promotional materials produced by the Department of Women's Ministries, and an evaluation of the Trained Resource Persons program.

They had interviews with Directors Robert Cole, Jr., Robert Mayer, and EVP David Northup. Mission Director Harold Patterson furnished a written report on World Missions as he was in India at the time of the board meeting.

Aurora Women's News

Ruthi Marcus and Barbara Wrought successfully cochaired the spring bake and rummage sale raising over $900 for the Aurora, Illinois WHFMS. Dorothy Crouse recently reviewed "Spring Moon" by Betty Lord dealing with reactions to the breakdown of traditions in China and effects on missionary work. Their spring salad luncheon featured missionary speakers from Thailand, Mr. and Mrs. Richard Bryant.

A Merry Heart Makes a Cheerful Countenance

The Proverb in the title was one of the verses used at the Mother and Daughter event at LaVerne, California when they enjoyed fellowship, a program, and a salad luncheon. At a WHFMS Evening Circle meeting Mary Chandler reviewed "Ruth" by Ellen G. Traylor from this year's recommended reading list.

Retreats in Alabama and Ohio Conferences

Women with a vision for becoming more effective Christians planned a one-day retreat in both the Alabama and Ohio WHFMS Conferences. Women came together for fellowship, fun, and learning. Director of Women's Ministries Caroline Michael presented two of the TRP workshops for each retreat group. There was good participation and enthusiasm displayed by the women representing four different local WHFM societies at each location.

Laura Stone had arranged with the DeKalb County Public Library for the use of their conference room in Fort Payne, Alabama and women came from Chattanooga, Hopewell, Walnut Park of Gadsden, and Stevenson. The ladies of the Columbus, Ohio WHFMS hosted women from Claiborne, Rockbridge, and Sparta in their church facilities. Each local WHFMS group is working on the goals they set as a result of the Trained Resource Person workshops.

Small group interaction in Columbus

From the President's Pen

Bea Moore

In recent weeks I have spent time reviewing the goals of WHFMS, and rethinking our current programs. Are they pertinent to our goals? Or have we in our thinking and planning moved to the right or left of our original purpose? It's good for us to periodically reexamine ourselves and our purpose so we will keep on track in our work for the Lord.

I have been reading *A Time for Risking* by Miriam Adeney. In it she deals with the choices with which women are confronted daily. The issue is how they determine their avenues of service for the Lord — what is their priority from among so many good choices? She quotes from R. Pierce Beaver in "All Loves Excelling" who traced the rise of women's mission committees in North America, beginning with the "Cent Society" in 1802.

"The women's societies were successful because they gave women responsibility which nurtured Christian character and enlisted vast numbers of them through auxiliaries in genuine involvement...When direct participation, education, and promotion were taken from them and they were no longer asked to do the seemingly impossible, passionate devotion cooled...Girls have not been 'brought up in the mission' as were their mothers."

It was further stated that over the years mission societies took keen interest in the work of individual missionaries and generated the interest and concern of others within their churches by mission education: "When in mainline denomination after denomination the women's mission societies were co-opted and amalgamated into general mission boards, this lively grass roots missions education slipped down the agenda, and its momentum has never been regained."

This should make us think. We, as an organization, have been struggling to minister to the needs of women; but, have we lost sight of our identity as a mission society? Our missionaries still need strong support. Our churches need continued mission education. How do we set our priorities for service? I pray for the Lord's direction, and wish you would share your thoughts with me. Together we seek to be God's women, open to His leading, — caring, sensitive, and faithful to the end!

Beatrice Moore, National WHFMS President
Route 8, Box 274, Loudon, NH 03301

Mission Prayer Partnership

JULY

19 **Praise** God along with **Alice Brown** for the confirmation of God's will for her during the next school year.

20 **Pray** for our Advent Christian army **chaplains.**

21 **Praise** God for being **El Shaddai**-our nourisher, our strength.

22 **Pray** that the Word of Christ that dwells richly in **Frank** and **Judy Jewett** will bring others to Christ during their deputation.

23 **Pray** for our national radio ministry.

24 **Pray** for Pastor Nowyn Jangad in Mandaue, **Philippines** as he speaks the truth of the Word of God in love to his parishioners.

25 **Pray** for the pastors and the laymen in **Nigeria**, may the joy of the Lord continue to be their strength.

26 **Stand** with the pastors and other people in **Malaysia** that no weapon formed against them shall prosper.

27 **Praise** God for the angels which watch over **Marion Damon** in India.

28 **Pray** for the three churches in **Japan** who would like to have a short-term missionary.

29 **Praise** God along with the **Warriners** as they receive a new grandchild this month.

30 **Pray** for God's anointing on **Musa Powers** as she prepares material for the Japanese video, now being made.

31 **Pray** for **Margaret Helms** as she richly feeds on God's Word.

AUGUST

1 **Pray** today for the Advent Christian Regional **Superintendents.**

2 **Praise** God for the repairs that have been done on the buildings in **Memphis.**

3 **Pray** for Pastor **Brent Carpenter** as he becomes Director of Church Relations.

4 **Pray** for the **Appalachian Regional meetings** that are meeting today.

5 **Pray** for the area where **Beryl Joy Hollis** ministers that the gardens of the people there will be bountifully blessed.

6 Pray for **Bruce Arnold**, who recently arrived in the Philippines. He will be leading several Bible studies as well as working with the churches in the Cebu City area.
7 Pray for the increased interest among the American people for **Urban** ministry.
8 Pray for the **staff** who produce the *News* and the *Witness*. God bless the printed page!
9 Pray for the children's work in **Mexico**. How happy they must feel to receive God's good news.
10 Praise God for being **Jehovah-Raah. He** is the Great **Shepherd!**
11 Pray for the future of an Advent Christian training facility for **students** of the Advent Christian faith.
12 Pray for **young people** to pursue Christian studies.
13 Pray for the followers of Christ to daily read the Bible, to praise Him and to wait upon Him for the anointing to fall upon them, so that their tasks will be truly successful.
14 Pray for the students at Oro Bible College in the **Philippines.**
15 Pray for the needed faculty persons for **Oro Bible College.**
16 Praise God for being Jehovah-Shalom. He is our peace, our light, our joy.
17 Pray for greater **mission** awareness by Advent Christian churches.
18 Pray for **Barbara White** as she witnesses for Christ at her medical dispensary.
19 Pray for the **West Virginia Conference** which is meeting today at Camp Whitney.
20 Praise God for **David Vignali** today, as he enjoys attending his family reunion.
21 Pray for **Pastor Devairakkam**, as he greatly enhances the work of the Lord in Malaysia.
22 **The missionaries in Japan are praying,** "God let them hear your voice, let them say, here am I, send me."
23 Pray for **Barbara White** in her work in India.
24 Pray for the Advent Christian **Urban Ministry** that will concentrate on bringing Christ to the people in our cities, to children who have only heard the name of Jesus be used as a curse word.
25 Since the missionaries in **Japan** are nearing retirement, they are earnestly **praying** for Advent Christian youth to take over the task representing the Advent Christian faith in Japan.
26 Pray for **Pastor Devasayaham** as he becomes more like Jesus.
27 Praise God for He is **Jehovah Tsidkenu.** All those with clean hands and a pure heart—He will loose streams of righteousness in their lives.
28 **Today is Advent Christian Youth Sunday. Stand** in the gap for them—make up the hedge for them. **Intercede** for them as they will take upon themselves the responsibility of keeping the denomination alive in future years.
29 Praise God for **Marion Damon** as she so faithfully shows God's light to those living in darkness.
30 May the ones who feed on hate in the Memphis inner city be touched by the **One** who loves all.
31 Pray for the Christians in **Nigeria** as God becomes more of a light unto their paths.

SEPTEMBER

1 Praise God for being **Jehovah-Shammah** the One who doesn't leave or forsake His church.
2 Pray for the physical, emotional and spiritual strength of **Alice Brown's mother.**
3 Pray for the Japanese couples who are getting married under the annointing of **Floyd Powers'** ministry in the Hilton Chapel in Japan.
4 Praise God for the new **graduates** from **Oro Bible College.**
5 Pray for **Bruce Arnold** to adjust smoothly to the culture of the Philippine people. Also pray for his safety.
6 Pray for the **pastors** as they faithfully feed on God's word so that they can **give** an annointed message to their congregations who must work in secular jobs all week.
7 Pray for the Christians in **China.** Pray for seeds of fruit sown by the Toothes and others to bring forth a present day harvest.
8 Pray for more Japanese to let **God** be praised and worshipped and not idols or worshipping of family members. He is the Alpha and Omega, our King and God. May they see that.
9 Pray for **David Vignali** as he travels the Midwest. Pray for our midwest churches. May they feel the love of Christ flowing to them from the rest of us.
10 Pray for the students of the School of Evangelism in **India.**
11 Pray for Caroline Michael, Director of Women's Ministries and Margaret McManus, her secretary on this day, **WHFMS Sunday.**
12 Pray for **Margaret Helms** as she initiates some new ministries in the Banawa area of Cebu, Philippines.
13 Pray for the healing and recovery for former mission director, Ed Hickel's wife after brain tumor surgery.
14 Praise God for nothing is impossible with **Him.**
15 Pray for the faithfulness of **God's people** to freely **give** as they freely receive.
16 Praise God for **revealing** Himself to the Church.
17 Pray for **Margaret Helms** as she celebrates her birthday tomorrow.
18 Pray for **Millie Griswold**, Director of Christian Education and her secretary **Jean Rogers** on this day, **Christian Education Sunday.**

How Well Do You Listen?

William Batson

Surveys of married couples will often list communication as one of the most common problems in marriage. The *Ladies Home Journal* polled over 30,000 women and discovered only one problem ranked above conflicts over money —poor communication. Research Terri Schultz wrote, "Although many women chose their partners based on sex appeal, research shows that if they had to do it again, they said the ability to communicate is much more important."

The ability to communicate. What is it? One of the best explanations I have found comes from H. Norman Write: "Communication is the process of both verbal and nonverbal sharing in such a way that one's message can be accepted and understood by another. It is the process of transmitting and receiving feelings, attitudes, facts, and beliefs that transpires between living beings."

Learning to listen

Occasionally, I hear people complain about their spouse's failure to express opinions and feelings. The more frequent complaint is related to their spouse not listening. Effective communication must include listening. If the truth be known, most of us would rather be talking.

Listening is probably the most important and the most underdeveloped communication skill we possess. Courses on the art of speaking are readily available. But the art of listening is taken for granted. We automatically assume we know how to listen.

If a spouse fails to develop and practice good listening habits in the marriage relationship, then isolation and marriage morbidity will be the inevitable results. Pretending to listen fakes interest in what is said and communicates to your mate that what they have to say is not important. If what I have to say is irrelevant, then I must be unimportant. The way you listen and respond to another person has an effect on their sense of self-worth that can either build a fulfilling relationship or put distance between you.

Listening must be relearned

Walter Wangerin, Jr., writing in *As For Me and My House*, says that good listening must be relearned again and again because we grow used to each other. "The newness of the relationship resolves into sameness: same person, same voice, same tone of voice, the same old topics. Her talking becomes a background hum, like Musak; he repeats the same old tune (we think), the same refrain of irritations. And so we prejudice those closest to us; that is, we prejudge their talk, assuming we know what they're going to say before they say it — and do not listen. You have my ear, my dear (but not my mind, my clean attention, or room in my heart; these, for the moment, are filled with my self)."

The most effective skill we can develop in marital communication is "active" listening. The Bible speaks about the importance of being a ready listener, giving our focused attention to the one who is speaking (James 1:19).

So much of our communication is done while we are on the move. Our hurried pace creates an environment where messages are not always clearly received. I can't begin to tell you the number of times Cindy's messages were misunderstood as a result of our fast-track lifestyle. Of course, it was never my fault. She simply failed to transmit on a clear frequency. Well, maybe I was tuned in to another channel at the time.

Active listening means that when my mate is talking I will not be thinking about what I am going to say when she stops talking. It also means complete acceptance without judgment of what she says or how she says it. It does not mean I have to agree with everything that is said, but for the time being I lay aside myself and take in her thoughts.

We greatly improve marital communication when we give focused attention to our mates. When talking to our daughters I have often said, "Let me see your eyes." I've noticed Cindy will use the same technique on me. She simply stops talking until I close the book and look her in the eyes. It is then that she knows I am giving her priority. And that builds a healthy marriage. □

William Batson is pastor of the Portsmouth, New Hampshire Advent Christian Church and founder of "The Family Builders," a ministry devoted to building strong Christian marriages and families.

Your Servants for Christ's Cause

International Missionaries

Philippines

Alice Brown (March 24)
P.O. Box 223
9000 Cagayan de Oro
PHILIPPINES

Margaret Helms (September 18)
P.O. Box 263
6000 Cebu City
PHILIPPINES

Frank and Judy Jewett
(December 11 and January 29)
Danny Jewett (June 13, 1976)
Timmy Jewett (June 26, 1978)
Letitia Jewett (April 13, 1980)
34 Main Street
Eliot, ME 03903

David Vignali (May 10)
P.O. Box 223
9000 Cagayan de Oro
PHILIPPINES

Bruce Arnold (June 21)
P.O. Box 263
6000 Cebu City
PHILIPPINES

Japan

Floyd and Musa Powers
(October 8 and February 28)
Rebecca Powers (Nov. 11, 1971)
4-11-18 Motoyama Kitamachi
Higashinada ku, Kobe shi 658
JAPAN

Austin and Dorothy Warriner
(January 1 and January 18)
3-37 Okayama Higashi
5 Chome, Shijonawate Shi
Osaka Fu 575
JAPAN

India

Marion Damon (March 27)
Box 17, Andivilla
Kodaikanal 624101
INDIA

Beryl Joy Hollis (December 16)
American Advent Mission
Velacheri, Madras 600 042
INDIA

Barbara White (January 14)
Box 17, Andivilla
Kodaikanal 624101
INDIA

al Missionaries

amy and
Devairakkam
Sayang Housing Trust
ang, Johor
IA

Beulah Devasahayam
Tempaka
mbira
ing, Selangor
A

Memphis

Francis and Lyne Ssebikindu
(May 13 and May 8)
Faith Nancy (September 28, 1982)
Ashley Grace (November 21, 1985)
2590 Faxon Avenue
Memphis, TN 38112

Mexico

Abel Garcia-Lara
368 Anita Street, Sp. 62
Chula Vista, CA 92011

Alberto Gomez
Arturo Angulo
Ever Perez
Ezequiel Serrato
c/o Abel Garcia-Lara

Nigeria

E.A. Akpan—Superintendent
Nigerian Advent Christian Mission
P.O. Box 1642, Uyo
Akwa Ibom State
NIGERIA

AC04948
University of North Carolina
Serials Dept. Davis Library
080 A
Chapel Hill, NC 27514

Advent Christian General Conference
P.O. Box 23152
Charlotte, NC 28212

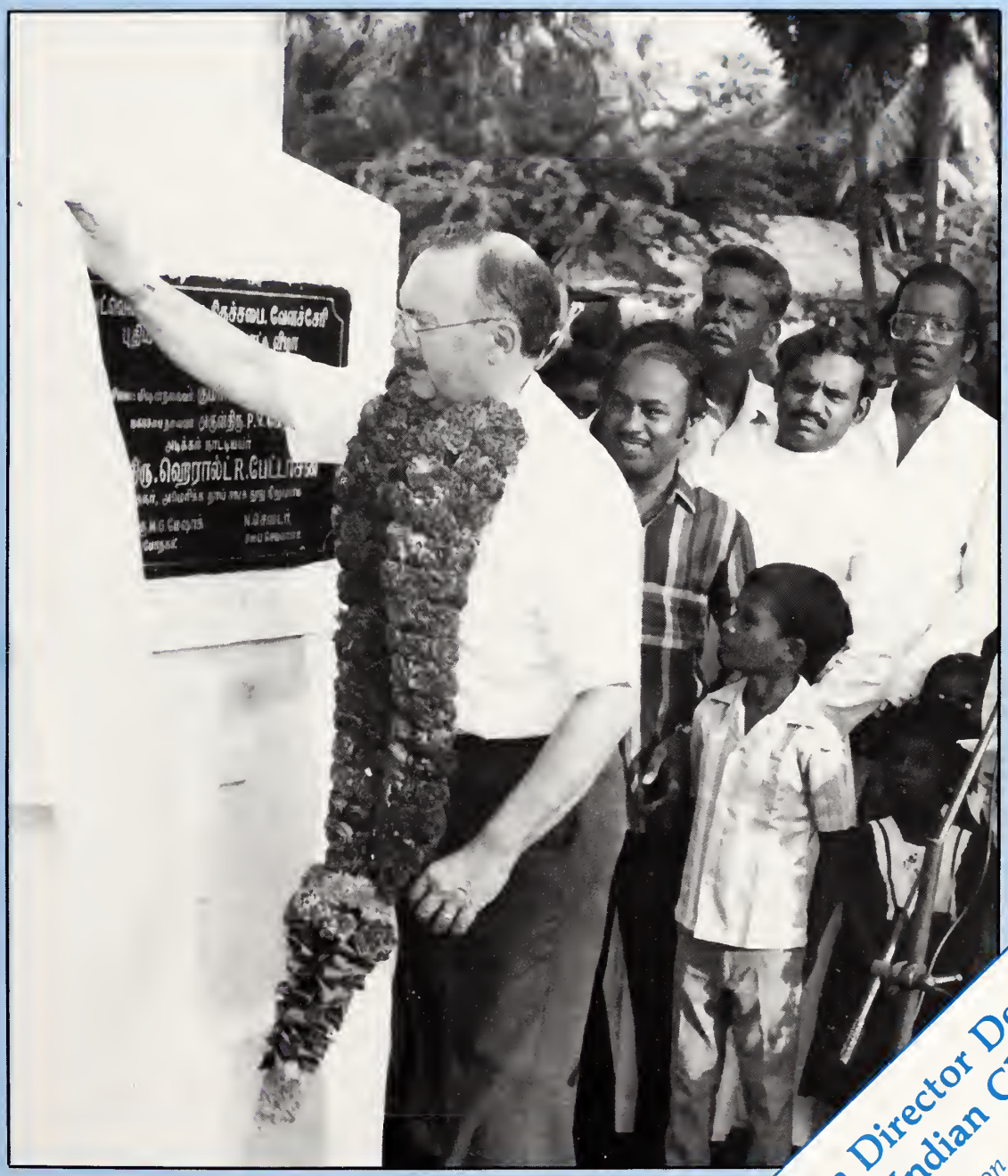
erson; World Missions
old; Christian Education
chael; Women's Ministries

Robert W. Cole; Finance
Robert Mayer; Publications
David Northup; Executive Vice-president

C286.5
A24

Advent Christian WITNESS

September 1988



Mission Director Dedicates New Indian Church

interview on page eight

FEATURES

Spotting the North Star of Integrity 4

In a world filled with corruption and compromise, Ted Engstrom helps believers discover how to live with integrity and moral certainty.

Mission Director Finds Openness and Apathy Toward Gospel 8

In this exclusive Witness *interview, director of world missions Harold Patterson shares reflections and observations from his just completed five nation trip.*

Divorced, Devastated, but not Defeated 12

Pastor Melvin White recounts how God's leading enabled Mary to build a new life out of the devastation and financial ruin of divorce.

DEPARTMENTS

From the Editor	3
Review	11
Women's Ministries	18
Prayer Partnership	21
Family Builder	23

ON THE COVER:

Director of world missions Harold Patterson dedicates a new Advent Christian church building in India. Advent Christian congregations in India are growing rapidly as men and women, boys and girls become disciples of Jesus Christ. *photo courtesy of Advent Christian World Missions*

Volume 36 Number 8

Advent Christian WITNESS

Editor **Robert Mayer**

Contributing Editors **Caroline Michael, Harold Patterson, William Batson, Clayton Blackstone, David McCarthy**

Typesetting **Susan Gettis** Proofreading **Shirley Brooks**

Art Director **Linda Perault**

The Advent Christian Witness (ISSN #007-740) is published monthly except for a combined July-August issue by the Advent Christian General Conference of America, 14601 Albemarle Road, P.O. Box 23152, Charlotte, N.C. 28212. Subscription rates in the United States and Canada: One year, $11.00. Single copy: $1.00. Overseas rate: One year, $14.00. Second class postage paid at Charlotte, N.C. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Advent Christian Witness, P.O. Box 23152, Charlotte, N.C. 28212.

As the official publication of the Advent Christian General Conference, the Advent Christian Witness publishes the teachings of the Advent Christian Church and promotes the task of evangelism both in North America and around the world. The views expressed in this magazine are those of the author and may not necessarily reflect those of the editor or the Advent Christian General Conference. Member: Evangelical Press Association.

Copyright © 1988 by the Advent Christian General Conference of America, Inc.

FROM THE EDITOR

INTEGRITY IS NOT OPTIONAL

What's the most used word on television news? In 1988, I'll wager that it's *scandal.* Can you remember anytime in the last two years when at least one major scandal hasn't dominated news coverage? And what's unique about the last two years is this: Scandals have not been limited to government (though there's plenty of government corruption to write about), but have broken out in business, law, the church, and a host of other professions.

Because this is an election year, we'll hear propaganda from both Democrats and Republicans about how their party represents virtue, justice, and truth while the other party is the focus of corruption, greed, and lawlessness. But anyone who takes even a cursory look at politics today knows there's plenty of corruption, greed, and lawlessness in both political parties. Besides, the politicians simplistic rhetoric misses the issue entirely.

Corruption in government, business, and the church only reflects what's happening throughout our society. Though, "integrity has proved itself to be at the heart and core of survival," according to Ted Engstrom, many people dismiss it as something restrictive to personal freedom and an option they can do without.

Scandal reflects the disappearance of integrity, and integrity disappears when people govern their lives and affairs by what syndicated columnist Cal Thomas calls the *doctrine of relativity.* In Thomas' words, "Today, few believe that truth exists except in the mind of the individual. So, what is true for one person may not be true for the other, but it doesn't make any difference as long as each person is happy." If honesty, truthfulness, and other values that have girded Western civilization for 3,500 years make you unhappy, today's moral relativity allows you to discard them at your convenience.

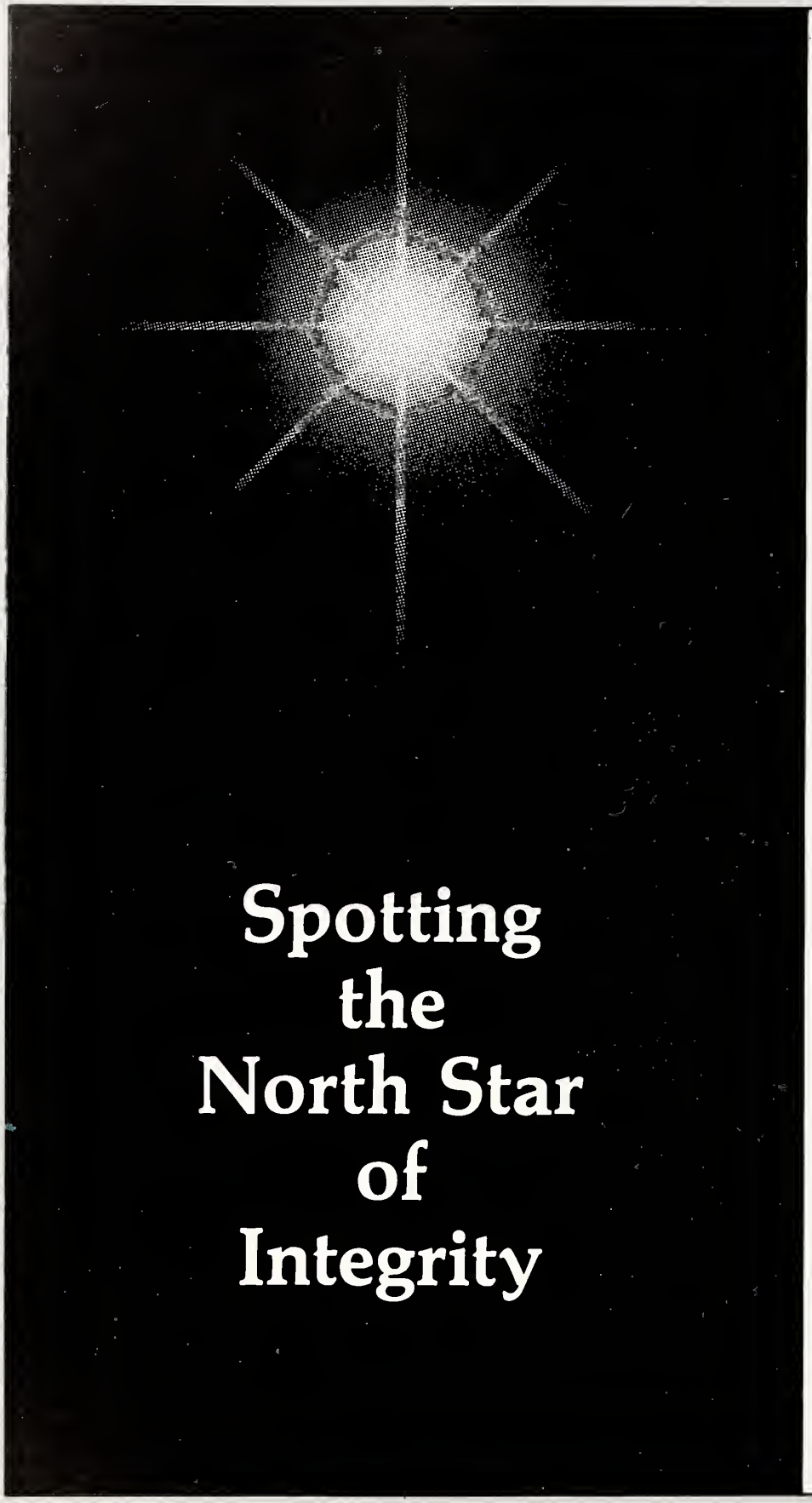
It's easy to point fingers at politicians, Wall Street stockbrokers, and television preachers especially when they delight in pointing competitive fingers at each other. Their moral and ethical indiscretions make such inviting, attractive targets for ridicule. How easy to use them to exclude examining our own lives. We compare ourselves and our church to some person or organization and we say, "See, we're not so bad after all."

But if we buy into the ideas that happiness and comfort are the most important values in life and that truth can be found only within our personal experiences and feelings, we've taken a giant first step away from integrity. Those ideas, so popular in modern culture, stand in stark contrast to all that Jesus taught about life. And because so many Americans now believe them, corruption in politics, business, and even the church has become commonplace.

The great Russian writer and human rights advocate Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn has seen government corruption and the destruction of human liberties engulf his native land. Commenting on the current condition of Russia, Solzhenitsyn declared, "Over a half century ago, while I was still a child, I recall hearing a number of older people offer the following explanation for the great disasters that had befallen Russia: Men have forgotten God; that's why all this has happened.

"Since then I have spent fifty years working on the history of our revolution; in the process I have read hundreds of books, collected hundreds of personal testimonies,

Continued on page 22



Spotting the North Star of Integrity

Ted Engstrom and Robert Larson

I enjoy shopping as much as the next person. Take new cars for instance. Here we consider those things that are mandatory for making the car work, and those things that are optional for making it more convenient.

Sometimes it's easy to confuse the two. My family has had this problem upon occasion. It's mandatory that a car have a motor, transmission, and wheels. But it's only optional that the car have eight cylinders, five-speed stick shift, and mag rims. It's mandatory that the car have seats and windows, but leather interior and power features are optional. Now I have nothing against convenience and luxury (within reason). But some people allow their desire for the options to lure them into buying a vehicle whose mandatory functions are inadequate or unsafe. That's like putting the cart before the horsepower.

How often do we do this same thing in our own personal lives? It's easy to mistake our wants for our needs.

And sometimes we even do the opposite. We mistake an urgent need for an expendable want. Such is the case with integrity. Here's something that's mandatory, and many people act as if it is only optional.

Integrity has proven itself to be at the heart and core of survival. Yet why do so many people dismiss it as a mere option

they can waive? The result of this oversight can be devastating.

Allow me to show you a "north star" of conscience we can always rely upon to supply the mandatory guidance we need in matters of principle and ethics. To see this directional star, we will have to step outside once more into the dark night of sin and confusion where much of the world has lost its way. The more we understand about why integrity is mandatory and not optional, the more we will come to see and trust this north star of conscience.

Staking our lives on integrity

How should you feel when someone behaves as if the reference point of integrity is only an accessory? In my estimation, words like "frightened," "betrayed," and "incensed" may be too mild.

It's hard to imagine how many times we stake our lives on the integrity of someone else.

Look at the simple plane flight. I do a great deal of traveling, so this is a topic dear to me.

Getting to and from the airport can often be the most dangerous part of the journey. Every car you encounter is only a matter of inches and milliseconds from plowing into your vehicle, save for the integrity of each individual driver. It's been said that one out of every ten drivers on the road is under the influence of alcohol or some other type of mind-altering chemical. Their optional adherence to safety is your mandatory concern.

At the airport, dozens of employees—from the security inspection guards to the maintenance workers to the air traffic controllers—lay another set of hands on your well-being. Do they view their training, their daily updates, their timetables as mere options or mandatory responsibilities?

Once in the air, your life and that of your fellow passengers is in the firm grip of a pilot and his crew. Does this professional mind the checklists and flight plans as carefully as you mind memos and procedural instructions? How optional is accuracy and completeness at 600 miles per hour and 25,000 feet in the air?

But we don't fly every day. Some people never ride in airplanes. Does that mean we're safe from the integrity failure of others as long as we keep out of the sky? Obviously not. There are long lists of other professionals who hold your life in their hands every day—water treatment technicians, utility workers, toxic waste professionals, railroad engineers, doctors, and other health caregivers. What does integrity mean to these people? Thank God the overwhelming majority of such individuals are dedicated, caring professionals.

But unfortunately, we do hear stories of the railroad engineer on marijuana, the nurse on morphine, the unscrupulous (or exhausted) doctor, the mob-controlled toxic waste dump operator, and so on. Remember it was a safety and training exercise that caused the Russian error at the Chernobyl nuclear reactor in 1986. This "accident" sent a cloud of radioactive dust around the world. In this day and age, integrity is not an elective. It is a required subject.

Betrayed

Events like this remind me of the way I felt when I crushed my hip—pained and betrayed! What once seemed so dependable and permanent turned against me forever at the blink of an eye. My hip had always held up its share of the load until it was destroyed in a grinding head-on collision in 1944. Then followed twenty-four years of pain, limping, and limitations. Fortunately, I was able to have it rebuilt by a marvelous surgeon in 1968—Dr. Otto Aufranc in Boston. But one leg is now shorter than the other, and I have to be careful about placing too much strain on the hip. It can never completely go back to the way it was.

Where once I was confident about the technology of nuclear energy, now I limp along with the uneasy feeling that someone must devote his whole mind to the half-life of nuclear waste for many generations to come.

In a similar manner, I feel betrayed by revelations that the Attorney General of the United States is involved in unethical business dealings. (Whether or not Attorney General Edwin Meese was guilty of arranging special favors of the Wedtech

Continued on next page

Corporation is a matter for the courts to decide.) In my mind the man is innocent until proven guilty. But there is a definite breakdown of integrity somewhere in the process—even if it's on the side of those who might be accusing him falsely. Nonetheless, I feel betrayed by the simple fact that the highest attorney in the nation is virtually immobilized by questions of morality.

No doubt there are dozens of other issues that evoke similar feelings in other people. The Dalkon contraceptive shield betrayed thousands of women with medical complications. Several decades ago a drug called Thalidomide caused hundreds of expectant mothers in need of sedation throughout their pregnancy to give birth to terribly deformed babies.

History of wrong options

How easy it is to lose our way without the knowledge of how to use the north star of conscience. We'll turn the telescope on this heavenly body after we examine a few more earthly examples of people who thought integrity was an option—people from the pages of the Bible.

I start with a man who murdered one fourth of the human race in a single stroke. He cared about himself, but doubted his duties toward anyone else. "Am I my brother's keeper?" asked Cain after clubbing Abel to death. All Cain wanted to do was hold up an offering to God without putting down his feelings of jealousy and envy. In his mind, to change these destructive feelings was only a bothersome option.

Cain had good instruction in treachery. His parents had betrayed more than just a fourth of humanity. They failed the entire human race. God told them, "Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat (enormous options); but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat (one mandatory requirement)" (Gen. 2:17, 18, additions mine).

All we have to remember is to do unto our neighbor as we would have him do unto us: starting with that first and great neighbor called God.

But what happened? Adam and Eve mistook the mandatory command for the optional choices. In one simple action, they broke at least half of the Ten Commandments and brought down the death sentence upon themselves and all their progeny. "For in the day that you eat of it, you shall surely die" (Gen. 2:17).

By the way, this verse does not mean that Adam and Eve were to die that very day. But rather it means they would bring themselves under the sure promise of death that very day. God, who inhabits eternity, often speaks of those things that "do not exist as though they did" (Rom. 4:17).

Esau was in line to inherit his father's estate—which included the birthright promise of the holy land. But to him it seemed nothing more than a casual choice. "Soup or salad?" "Dinner or the promised land?" Esau chose dinner and his brother, Jacob, took the promises—all because Esau mistook a mandatory commitment to his heritage as a careless option for the moment. He lost sight of this north star of conscience and crashed into the dangerous rocks of compromise.

Jacob's sins were not immune to this character flaw. In fact, his firstborn son, who should have inherited the birthright, compromised himself and also lost sight of the mandatory option of integrity. "Surely no one expects me to control my passions," he may have reasoned. "I'm the oldest son and next in line to lead this clan. I'll do what I want. And besides, no one will ever find out."

But what happened?

"And it happened, when Israel dwelt in that land, that Reuben went and lay with Bilhah his father's concubine; and Israel heard about it" (Gen. 35:22).

Was the need for moral integrity a mere option in the mind of father Israel (Jacob)? Years later when he was about to die, Jacob gathered his sons around him to confer a final blessing on them. He started with the eldest. "Reuben, you are my firstborn, my might and the beginning of

my strength, the excellency of dignity and the excellency of power. Unstable as water, you shall not excel, because you went up to your father's bed; then you defiled it" (Gen. 49: 3, 4). Here Reuben discarded a lifetime of favor for himself and his heirs for one short moment of gratification. What appeared to be an optional accessory in life (moral integrity) turned out to be a requirement.

The examples are almost endless.

Moses himself never entered the promised land "Because you did not believe Me, to hallow Me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore you shall not bring this congregation into the land which I have given them" (Num. 20:12). Even the small matters of integrity were mandatory.

Two sons of Aaron, the High Priest, died while serving the Holy Tabernacle because they presented "profane fire" to God (Lev. 10:1). Though Samson was imbued with supernatural strength, he died in captivity because of his lust for Philistine women (Judges 16). King Saul lost his chance to become the head of royal dynasty through self-will (1 Samuel 15). David's sin with Bathsheba, though forgiven by God, resulted in the death of a son, and a blood-filled curse. "You have killed Uriah the Hittite with the sword; you have taken his wife to be your wife, and have killed him with the sword of the people of Ammon. Now therefore, the sword shall never depart from your house, because you have despised Me" (2 Sam. 12:9, 10).

How did David and these other men of the Bible "despise God"? Was it not because they beheld the sacred and called it "profane"?

Centuries later, Judas heard

Continued on page 16

Loving Pets More Than People

Kenneth Olsen

Recent discussion over a proposed city ordinance here in Jacksonville regarding the leashing of cats has drawn a lot of anger from pet lovers. I sympathize with them until neighborhood cats dig in my flower beds or cause a disturbance in the wee hours. But my main concern is why so many good folks who pamper their pets have so little concern about child abuse, pornography, teenage suicide, and such great causes as cures for AIDS, leukemia, Lou Gehrig's disease, heart disease, and more. It is also revealing that many who spend a great deal of money on their pets actually give less to their Lord, if any at all!

Have some inverted priorities in life? I think they have. It is not wrong to love pets, after all, we are stewards of God's creation. But to put pets above people is a mistake.

Perhaps, in kindness, it must be said that people can become disillusioned by others and retreat in pain from emotional involvements. People can hurt people deeply. Forgiveness and acceptance is needed. Caring and bearing with each other is necessary for believers and a Christian society.

Read what Paul wrote in Colossians 3:12-14: "Since you have been chosen by God who has given you this new kind of life, and because of His deep love and concern for you, you should practice tenderhearted mercy and kindness to others. Don't worry about making a good impression on them but be ready to suffer quietly and patiently.

Be gentle and ready to forgive; never hold grudges. Remember, the Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others.

Most of all, let love guide your life for then the whole church will stay together in perfect harmony."

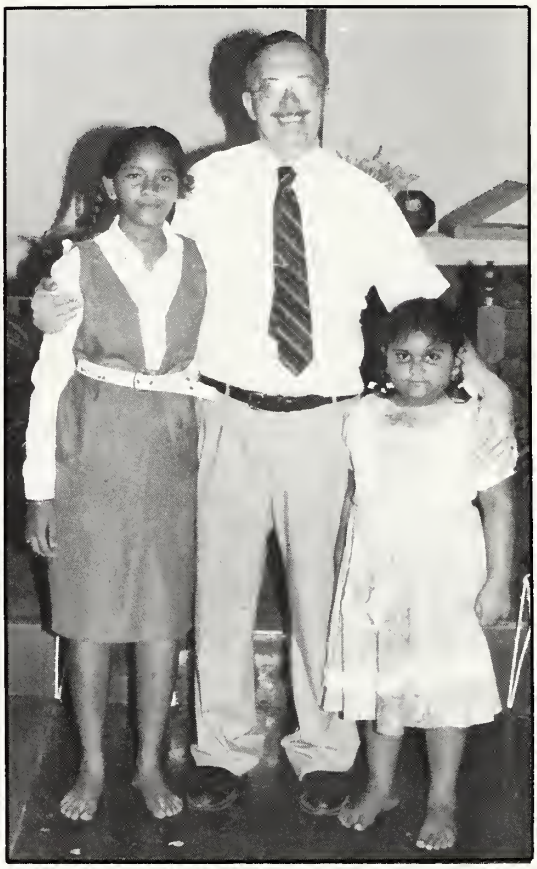
There doesn't have to be a choice between pets and people. But if there is, people always should come first. That's my view.

Kenneth Olsen is pastor of the West Jacksonville Advent Christian Church, in Jacksonville, Florida. This article originally appeared in The West Jax Story, *the church newsletter.*

an interview with Harold Patterson

Mission Director Finds Openness and Apathy Toward Gospel

Director of World Missions Harold Patterson returned in June from his second overseas visit to Advent Christian mission fields. On this trip he visited Advent Christian missions in India and Malaysia. In addition, he traveled to Singapore, Australia, and New Zealand. Upon his return, the *Advent Christian Witness* asked him for his impressions and reflections in this interview.



This was your second trip overseas since you became Director of World Missions. How did this trip differ from your first?

This time I covered over 30,000 miles and visited five countries — India, Malaysia, Singapore, Australia, and New Zealand. But the biggest difference was the opportunity I had to visit more of our churches in India and to do more preaching. I visited 20 out of our 60 India churches and was thrilled to find them packed to the doors. In many services people were looking in through the windows.

I also had the privilege of sharing in the ordination of 11 men in three separate ordination services in India. I dedicated 15 buildings, fourteen in India and one in Malaysia. I had the exciting privilege of baptizing 12 in the Pacific Ocean in Malaysia. Eight of them were former Hindus.

What was your purpose for traveling specifically to India, Malaysia, Australia, Singapore, and New Zealand?

The purpose of going to India and Malaysia was to visit our established mission fields. I had not been there before and I wanted a greater understanding of these fields. I went to Singapore and Australia to explore the possibility of new fields. Both of these places have specific needs that we might be able to meet. My reason for going to New Zealand was to continue the warm fraternal fellowship that we have enjoyed with our sister denomination, the Churches of Christ, Life and Advent. India missionary Beryl Joy Hollis is from this group. She has served us so faithfully in India all of these years and I'm hoping our New Zealand brothers and sisters might provide us other missionaries like her.

In India you had the opportunity to preach to the largest Advent Christian congregation in the world. Could you tell our readers something about that congregation?

Yes, the Advent Christian Church on our compound in Villacheri, India is a remarkable church. They now have over 250 families in their church making a total of over 1,000 members. They have an active ministry to

various age groups. They are desirous of constructing a new building to seat over 1,000 because they can no longer hold their congregation in their church building. I'm praying that this might indeed become a reality.

Another church that I visited nearby in Thiruvanmiyur has over 200 families in attendance and has received into membership over 50 families in the last four years. These two congregations provide only a sample of what's happening in our India Conference.

You traveled to many different churches in India. Did you feel well received by the people?

Yes, I received a most warm and impressive welcome. Every church planned a unique welcome ceremony. Some involved various presentations to me. At one congregation, the people would run a couple of miles from the church and then march back with me in celebration as we got to the church.

While you were there, you met with the leadership of India Advent Christian Conference. Based on your conversations with them, what goals do you forsee for that conference in the coming years?

We're concerned about planting new churches in the India Conference. We are pleased with the numerical growth in the established churches. We also need a renewal of our Conference Bible school to train more leaders to establish even more churches. So our goals focus around establishing a strong Bible school and also, of course, building the church buildings that are necessary to house these large and growing congregations.

The India missionaries are scheduled for retirement in 1994. After that, the India government won't allow us to send new missionaries into the country. How will that effect our relationship with the India Advent Christian Conference?

If things go as we anticipate, we will maintain only a fraternal relationship with the India Conference providing them some financial support. But they will completely govern themselves. What we hope to do is place an Advent Christian mission representative in someplace like Singapore. That person could periodically visit the work in India, answer their questions, and keep us up-to-date. The India Conference is concerned about the missionaries not being replaced and want to approach the government for the privilege of replacing these missionaries and not adding new ones. This is a new possibility that we are exploring.

Let's turn our attention to Malaysia. Reports in leading Christian magazines indicate that the Malaysian government is actively persecuting Christians in that country and hindering the communication of the gospel. Is Advent Christian mission work in Malaysia affected by that?

Not directly. There have been no incidences that I know of where our workers have been persecuted for their Christian work.

Continued on next page

Director of World Missions Harold Patterson dedicating a child in Malaysia.

Malaysia officially proclaims itself as a Moslem country. Is it true that Christians who proclaim the gospel to Moslems are subject to arrest and has that impacted our missionaries and pastors there?

In this case, yes. It has made a difference in what we do. The law does prohibit, even witnessing to a Moslem. If they are offended by your witness and complain to the authorities the Christian who witnessed to them could be arrested and jailed. What this has meant in our mission work is that we no longer have outside meetings. Our missionaries cannot run the risk of proclaiming the gospel openly where there might be those who are offended from the Moslem community. That means our witness now must be in those areas where they are only among Hindus or where there are definitely no Moslems present.

Singapore is one of the most unique countries in the world today. What led you to stop there?

For one thing, it was a stopping place for the airline and I had a layover there. But I had intended to stop there anyway, because Singapore is one of the places that we are looking at as a possible location for an assistant director who might be responsible for India and Malaysia in the future. Singapore is also only 15% Christian and the opportunity for a gospel witness is certainly there.

Reports indicate that Australia is one of the few countries in the world where the percentage of evangelical Christians is dropping. What attitudes did you discover among the Australians that you talked with?

I found the greatest apathy toward the gospel that I have ever run into. My purpose in Australia was to do survey work to determine if there was a need and an opportunity for Advent Christians. The Christian leadership I talked to in the greater Sidney area indicated that there was a need, and we would be welcome.

Talking to the average man on the street, and I did a lot of this, I found great apathy. Only one person admitted to going to church every week. Most grudgingly admitted that they went on Christmas and Easter. Many were openly agnostic and atheistic. I did not talk to a single young person under 30 years of age who even believed in God. It's incredible that we would find a nation so devoid of spiritual interests.

From what you have said it appears that Australia has become a secularized society. What in your opinion will it take to reach Australians with the good news of Christ's love?

I asked a question similar to that to the people that I talked to. I asked Christian leaders and some agnostic and atheistic people, and they both indicated that the only churches that were growing were spirit-filled churches, who demonstrated the power of the gospel. Mere reasoning is not enough to change the minds of these people. Some said to me that they had given up believing in the Apostles' Creed. What seems to be impacting them is the demonstration that the Lord is alive and working.

New Zealand was the last stop on your trip. We have a group of sister churches in that country that many Advent Christians in the United States and Canada know little about. What can you tell our readers about them?

We do have a sister denomination there, the Churches of Christ, Life and Advent. This is a live and viable group of 7 congregations with over 400 members. I found them a warm and loving people interested in the Advent Christian Church, and particularly in our mission work. They wanted to be remembered to the Advent Christian people, particularly to those who had visited New Zealand in recent years such as past Executive Vice-president Adrian Shepard, Dr. Louia Gransee, and former missionaries Jack and Connie Jones. They resemble us in doctrine at many points with the exception that they tend to be dispensationalist in theology and eschatology.

In your days in New Zealand, what was the most significant event that happened to you?

I got to New Zealand and discovered the weekend I had chosen to be there was the weekend of their annual conference meeting. I was invited to bring the main address. The conference was well attended and

lasted three days. It was a joy and an enlightening experience to be part of this conference. Interestingly enough among their discussions were questions dealing with their future as a denomination, their distinctives, and also, their publication and its future. As a result of these small group and brainstorming sessions they seemed to come out much stronger in conviction and that they did have a work and a ministry to develop.

After two trips abroad you've had opportunity to develop some initial impressions of the Advent Christian missions. What do you see as some of our strong areas of ministry?

We've certainly done a good job in training nationals to spread the gospel. Wherever I have been, our national pastors seem to be good people. I find too that we have dared to attack the enemy on his own grounds and have been successful. Again, let me say that our missions have been strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. This has been a powerful witness to the other cultures that we have visited and ministered among.

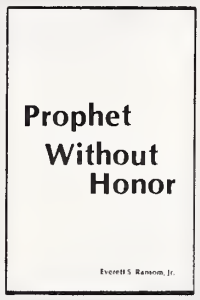
In what ways do we need to strengthen Advent Christian missions from your perspective?

Again, we need to commit a considerable amount of our effort to training nationals to reach their own people. This is the most effective means that we have and one of the fastest ways to evangelize people. In India I found that not only was pastoral

Continued on page 14

Prophet Without Honor

Clyde E. Hewitt



Certainly unique to the literature that has grown up about William Miller and the religious movement he started is Everett S. Ransom, Jr.'s historical novel, *Prophet Without Honor*. Unique, but, in this reviewer's opinion, with the potential to make a significant contribution to the Adventist cause.

That conclusion, however, cannot be appreciated without an understanding of the content of the novel and a feeling for its style. So far as the latter is concerned, it's easy to read, the development of the story is entertaining—many will want to say "engrossing," —the fictional characters are believable, and the interweaving of the fictional with the historical is smoothly done.

As to content, Rev. Ransom has chosen to highlight those episodes in Miller's life and career which have human interest value and which helped to shape, or demonstrate, his character—e.g., his service as a captain in the War of 1812, his conversion from Deism, and his subsequent Christian growth. A glimpse is given into his message. One of the more dramatic incidents which befell Adventists in their fruitless wait on that last long day when they confidently looked for Christ's return, the Gorgas incident, is a believable, perhaps exciting, blend of what *actually* happened in the fields outside Philadelphia on the night of October 21-22, 1843 and what *supposedly* happened to the chief fictional character. The author concludes his story as the historian in him leads him to, with a brief consideration of what happened next. He indicates how William Miller reacted to what has rightly been called "The Great Disappointment."

Obviously, Ransom, within the 135 pages of what is a brief story, writes no exhaustive biography of William Miller, either in fictional or factual form. Much of the man's life, his relations with his family, even the widespread preaching of his message is simply not there. Nor could it be. Nor should it be, if this reviewer is correct in understanding Bro. Ransom's purpose in writing. Ransom would like to see the modern church give this great exponent of the nowadays widely accepted doctrine of Christ's return "at the appointed time," the honor due him as one of the world's great evangelists. And, he wants his readers to preach the doctrine anew. "The Lord's coming is certainly nearer today than before! And the world is still not ready for him." So he writes in his prefatory statement.

An exhaustive biography is not needed to accomplish those purposes. *Prophet Without Honor* can well inspire readers to those ends, or, at least, to further study of Millerism. In a written note which Ransom sends out to those who order the book he also indicates that he hopes that it will serve to introduce his grandchildren, who do not live where there is an Advent Christian church, to Miller and his message.

This reviewer believes the book deserves a wide audience among Advent Christians. Each family and

Continued on page 22

The following story is true. Only the names have been changed.

Divorced, Devastated But Not Defeated!

Melvin W. White

A mother of two girls, 3 and 6, — divorced — little support from former husband — struggling to make ends meet with Aid to Dependent Children. This is not an unusual story. What IS unusual is what followed. This is that story.

Finances became slimmer and slimmer. One day Mary had a yard sale to raise some money. Since she was not getting too much help from her former husband, she sold some of his tools and things left with her at their house. One of the items she was trying to sell was a used hair dryer.

Are you a beautician?

A customer, interested in the dryer, asked Mary if she were a beautician.

"No, but I'd like to be," Mary replied. "I have finished hairdressing school and need to apprentice for two years before I can get my license. I don't see how that can happen, so I'm selling these things — including the dryer."

The sale was minimally successful but did keep Mary and her little ones, Patty and Penny, supplied for a while.

Shortly after that sale a call came from a neighbor a few streets away. Could Mary come over for a visit about a business proposition? Mary could — and did.

The neighbor was a hairdresser with her business in her home. She had been in business for many years but was terminating and moving across the country. She offered Mary the business — including its name and referred customers — if Mary would buy her equipment.

"You know," she went on, "this business was supposed to go to my daughter when I was through with it but she was killed in a tragic auto accident about fifteen years ago. She had just had a new car and asked five of her friends to go for a ride with her. One did not go, but all four of the others were killed as well as my daughter."

"I was the girl"

After asking a couple questions, Mary said, "I was the girl who decided not to go on that ride!"

Now it seemed clear that the Lord was in this matter. Mary lost no time finding a friend who would lend her the money with which to buy the equipment. Still, there was no place to have her shop.

She drew up some basic plans for a shop to be attached to the house so that she could both do the hairdressing and take care of her children. An architect friend made acceptable drawings, for $100, from her plans. It was estimated that the shell of the building would cost $4,000 and $3,000 for inside finishing.

Mary, with little but her faith that God was in what was happening, went to a local bank to talk with the manager. Again God was ahead of her! Some time before, Mary's cousin, then President of the local Chapter of Full Gospel Business Men, had conducted, along with the bank manager, a class on gifts of the Holy Spirit. Mary was in that class — the only contact she had had with the bank manager!

After presenting her needs, the following conversation ensued:

Manager: "What is your income?"

Mary: "None, except some ADC and inadequate child support from my former husband."

Manager: "What do you have for collateral?"

Mary: "Nothing."

Manager: "Well, let's see, what can you say will be your potential income?"

Mary then told him of the business the hairdresser had whose practice she was to take over. On the strength of this, and the evident faith emanating from Mary's spirit, the bank manager was moved to apply for the necessary loan. Approval came within three weeks. The year was 1977. The loan was for $7,000. Mary had 7 years to repay. A perfect combination!

Now to get the shop erected and approved in time for opening before Christmas! A contractor built the frame. The wiring and heating were installed and paid for by giving hairdressing services for the next 5 years. Mary's ex-husband was induced to do the inside finish work for a new table saw which he could use on the job and would be his upon completion of the work. The saw was donated by a lady for whom, again, Mary did hairdressing for the next 5 years!

More problems to overcome

Three major problems remained. Mary needed a licensed hairdresser to work with her for her two-year apprenticing. Such a home business had to be approved by the town. The business itself had to pass inspection and approval by the State Licensing Board for Hairdressers.

One day, while the shop was being built, Mary was in a hairdressing supply store. The mother of a friend of many years ago was there, too.

"What are you doing in here?" asked Mary. "You're not a hairdresser."

"No, but my daughter is. I just came in for some things for her."

"You mean Esther is a hairdresser?" Mary was surprised and delighted. "I haven't seen her in many years. Where does she live now?"

Mary looked her friend up in the telephone book and called her that evening. Esther was glad to hear from her old friend. She came over to Mary's house the next day.

"Would you consider giving up your present job and joining me in a new shop I am having built?" Mary's excited heart was racing again! Esther was willing — and did! They have now been

Continued on next page

together for over ten years!

Then there was the problem of approval of the business venture by the town. She could not have her shop attached to the house. However, if there were no direct access to the shop from the house, it would not be an in-the-house business and would be approved. Construction was done to satisfy that requirement. Now, incidentially, Mary would have it no other way. If someone were to break into the house or shop, he would not have access to the other, thus giving time to summon help!

One problem remained: How to be open by Christmas! A few days before Christmas, the State Inspector for hairdressing shops was to come by to make her inspection and give approval. A fierce blizzard made that visit impossible! Mary called her to see what could be done — if anything. The Inspector asked Mary questions regarding the setup of the shop, services and supplies available.

"You can consider yourself approved and be open tomorrow;" was her conclusion. "I'll be down at my earliest convenience to verify and ratify this action."

"Praise the Lord!" was about all Mary could think of at that moment.

Victory by God's power

Mary had been introduced to the Advent Christian Church through dear friends, Mr. & Mrs. Potter. Their daughter, Carolyn, used to babysit for Mary. Esther found the Lord as her Saviour while working with Mary. She and her husband also attended the same church. Patty and Penny began to go to Sunday school. Penny wanted to go to youth camp. There was not enough money for it. The church paid her way. Nothing like that had ever happened in Mary's life before. She started going to church with the girls. She had been reading and studying her Bible as well. She came to know Christ through the ministry of another church but was baptized in the Advent Christian Church which she joined a couple of years later.

Mary has changed from a shy, shrinking individual to one who is bold for her Lord. She is active in the life of her church and will always remember the God who saw her through one of the most traumatic experiences any mother can face. She knows how to stand with her brothers and sisters in Christ as His Body faces the attacks of Satan. They know full well that God has a work for them to do by His power — the same power that saw and supplied the needs of a young mother divorced, devastated, but *not* defeated! ☐

Melvin White is pastor of the North Springfield, Vermont Advent Christian Church.

Mission Director Finds Openness and Apathy Toward Gospel

Continued from page 11

training crucial, but they had done a good job of training their lay leadership in the areas of evangelism and church growth. Much of the success in India relates to trained lay leadership.

Further opportunities for training seems to be one of our key future ministries. That plus the fact that we are outgrowing our church buildings, not only in India, but in Malaysia, and in the Philippines. We need a strong capital development funds program to assist them in building the facilities that they need to house these growing congregations.

By the time most of our readers read your words, you'll be preparing for your third overseas trip. Could you tell us about what you plan to do and where you are going?

I will be going to Africa to visit Advent Christian mission work in Nigeria. According to the reports that I see, the Nigeria mission is enjoying good growth. I'm anxious to see it for myself and also have the opportunity to preach in Nigeria. I also intend to visit Liberia where a group of churches has expressed some interest in meeting with us much as did the people in Nigeria.

As you think about Advent Christians missions, if there were one or two things that you would want our readers to pray about in the next six months, what would they be?

Number one — pray that the Lord of the Harvest would thrust out more laborers into the harvest. We need more missionaries to serve on the fields than we have and to open new fields. Secondly, pray that God would provide the many thousands of dollars we need to construct the new worship facilities and Bible schools. ☐

NOW IN VIDEO!

A professional movie maker has produced for Vernon Homes a beautiful audio color film that may be shown on your VCR.

See our attractive refurbished health care center, our commodious apartments, and our retirement residence — all in color.

You will hear our residents — some you may know — tell of how satisfying retirement is at Vernon Homes.

You may have it on a free loan basis to show to your Conference, your Church, your Mission Society, and your relatives nearing retirement. Or enjoy it in the privacy of your home.

See how we have used your gifts which through the years have made Vernon Homes amongst the finest of retirement and health care centers.

You will see how God has blessed us.

Your letter or telephone call will bring a VCR tape to you at once.

VERNON GREEN

VERNON HALL

VERNON BIRCHES

VERNON ADVENT CHRISTIAN HOME, INC.

Vernon, Vermont 05354
Telephone: 802/254-6041

Christ's admonition to become "perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect" (Matt. 5:48). But his mind sought another standard. Judas wanted perfect riches. To him sincerity and service were mere options, until this attitude drove him to murder—and suicide.

With so many case histories to learn from, you'd think mankind would comprehend.

But even with the arrival of the Holy Spirit after Christ's ascension into heaven, believers continued to reveal a lack of integrity. Ananias and Sapphira lied to the apostle Peter and paid with their lives (Acts 5:9). Paul laments the state of those who are "turning away so soon from Him who called you in the grace of Christ, to a different gospel" (Gal. 1:6). And John recounts the sad tale of one who is "prating against us with malicious words. And not content with that, he himself does not receive the brethren, and forbids those who wish to, putting them out of the church" (3 John 10).

Centuries later a universal church became so intent on "putting out" the mandatory options of God that one reformer came pounding on the door with hammer and ninety-five theses in hand. In the sixteenth century, Martin Luther's candle against the darkness of optional spirituality kindled a forest fire of mandatory reform which we still feel today as the Protestant Reformation.

Disaster is conceived on a bed of neglect. And God's servants have never been fully celibate in this regard.

Spotting the north star

Now that our eyes are adjusted to the evils of the darkness around us in this spiritual night, let's pick out the north star of conscience.

The one thing that characterizes the north star and makes it useful as a celestial point of reference is that it does not move in the sky. Polaris (another name for this sphere) remains fixed while every other star revolves around it during the twelve hours of night. Often you will see a time-lapse photograph of circular streaks around a single fixed star. Here is the unmoving center of a pinwheel that always points north. It's not the brightest spot in the sky, but it is the most reliable.

In this day and age, integrity is not an elective. It is a required subject.

What point of scriptural truth provides the center for all else to rotate around? What faint axiom gives us the surest guidance?

Is the north star of conscience found in the beatitudes? Here you discover a long passage in Matthew 5 which tells us "blessed are the poor...those who mourn, the meek, those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, and those who are persecuted." Excellent admonitions, but this is too large a constellation of revelation to be a single star.

Is it the golden verse of the Bible, John 3:16? "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life." Superb map, but not a compass.

What verse would you point to?

I realize this is an artificial question. I'm sure there are dozens of passages that might qualify. In fact, the verse I have in mind is a New Testament echo of an Old Testament note. And it's amplified in a parallel scripture fifteen chapters later. But such a mental exercise is good for developing spiritual strength.

For me the north star of conscience is unique. Like Polaris, around which circulate all the other stars and heavenly bodies, here is a scripture upon which "hang all the law and the prophets."

You probably guessed this passage and didn't know why. It's called "the Golden Rule"; "Whatever you want men to do you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets" (Matt. 7:12).

Most people leave off the last clause about "the Law and the Prophets." But that's what places this verse at the center of the entire Bible.

A parallel passage, which reveals some of the alchemy behind the "golden" aspects of this rule, reflects another facet of this same truth. "You shall love the Lord your God with all your

heart, with all your soul, and wth all your mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself' " (Matt. 22:37-39).

We might not recognize these scriptures as synonymous if it weren't for the next verse. "On these two commandments *hang all the Law and the Prophets*" (v. 40 emphasis mine).

How can there be more than one book secure enough to hold all the Law and the Prophets? The Golden Rule—"do unto others as you would have them do unto you" (popular paraphrase)—is the same concept as loving your neighbor as yourself. And when you realize that God is our neighbor (who was here in the first place and kind enough to share His front lawn with us newcomers), you understand that the "first and great commandment" is part of the same vein of gold—"You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind."

What a beautifully simple way to find our direction in the integrity turbulence all around us! All we have to remember is to do unto our neighbor as we would have him do unto us—starting with that first and great neighbor called God.

To my way of thinking, this is a perfect answer to those who seek perfection. But not everyone seeks perfection. And when we do, it's often difficult to get things right even then.

Too many flowers

That reminds me of the man who couldn't even please his lady friend with flowers. A young man was deeply in love with a beautiful girl. One day she told him that the next day would be her birthday, and he laughingly said he would send her a bunch of roses, one for each year of her life.

That evening he wrote to his florist, ordering twenty-four roses to be sent to the young lady on the first delivery the following day. The proprietor of the flower shop, looking over the mail in the morning, said to his salesman:

"Tom, here's an order from young Mr. Higgins for twenty-four roses. He's a mighty good customer; let's give him a break and put in an extra dozen."

The young man never did find out what made his girlfriend so angry.

Always keep sight of Christ. As the living word of God, He reminds us of the Golden Rule which embodies "all the Law and the Prophets."

Moral compass

Even if we're leaning in the right direction, we still need a little support and encouragement to move us along. Over the years I've developed what I like to call a "Christian Survival Compass." Once we find the reference point of north, we still have to understand the importance of south, east, and west.

North—Always keep sight of Christ. As the living Word of God, He reminds us of the "Golden Rule" which embodies "all the Law and the Prophets."

East—Pray. Each sunrise in the east is our reminder to start the day in contact with the Creator.

South—Tackle the problems. We can't run. We've got to face them sometime, somewhere. South of Israel is the great "Negev" desert—the vast wasteland in which the Israelites wandered for forty years because they refused to face their problems. We can hide from people, but not from our troubles.

West—Just as the sun sets in the West, so will our future if we don't control our wandering passions for money, sex, and pride. Paul says, "Let not the sun go down on your wrath" (Eph. 4:26). To which we can add, "Let it not go down on pride, lust, or greed." Flee such vices quickly.

With this counsel controlling our thoughts, we can be confident about the direction and outcome of our lives. For thoughts hold the reins of action. This compass allows us to see clearly. And according to John Ruskin, "To see clearly is poetry, prophecy, and religion, all in one." □

Excerpted from Integrity *by Ted W. Engstrom and Robert C. Larson. Copy © 1987 by Word Books; Waco, Texas and used by permission.*

Caroline Michael
Director

June 29, 1986

Beverly Withrow

It was a beautiful church service—the music from the choir could not have been better, there was great fellowship with church members and friends, and a well-delivered patriotic sermon. The benediction was given, and then the pastor quietly asked everyone to be seated.

"There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under heaven: a time to be born and a time to die, a time to plant..." (Ecclesiastes 3:1, 2a). Following the reading of these verses, the pastor simply stated his resignation as pastor to this church after twelve-and-a-half short years.

How do you tell your church family goodbye after they've been a part of your family for almost 13 years. It's not easy!

This town and area have so many memories. Almost everywhere I look, I see a memory of our 13 years here—main street downtown where I saw my son march in the band, play his trombone, and later march as the drum major. How could I forget the local restaurant where my daughter was the day she skipped school, and her daddy walked in and found her there...the many friends we've learned to love...the old homes we've purchased and remodeled...and...the memories go on and on.

How does a pastor's wife reconcile in her mind the changes that come about because her husband feels the Lord's will is that he leave this area and move to another? I'm not sure I completely know the answer. I only know how difficult it's been for me, and, also in the end, the same Lord that caused this change to come about made it so worthwhile.

Maybe, it's time to change

For me, it was arguing with God for a long, long time. I spent a lot of time being despondent, knowing that I did not want to leave my church family.

About a year before we actually left, I saw the "handwriting on the wall." I saw those signs that said, "Maybe it's time to change," but at the time, I put them in the back of my mind and tried to see other things that would be an encouragement for us to stay.

Prior to my husband's resignation, I went to the church by myself one night. I didn't turn on a light, but went to each Sunday school room and thought of the class members and teacher and how much I was going to miss them if my husband resigned. I went to the fellowship hall, walked through the kitchen, and thought of the many social functions we had together and how that would be no more. I walked down the aisle of the church sanctuary, went to the altar, knelt and prayed, and begged God to turn this way of thinking around, so that we could stay. But it wasn't meant to be.

How would I know that our new church was going to be a church in which we could be happy, in which the church family and ours would "mesh." How would I know the church board and my husband would have a cohesiveness that is truly blessed by God. One thing that is done is some checking. Ministers and their families have a unique line of communication in which they can "check the church out." Some churches have histories of not treating their pastor kindly. Yes, church members, you may not believe that, but it is true! And ministers and their families avoid these churches if at all possible.

So we met with the deacon board of the church that would later become my husband's new place of employment. They all seemed nice enough, pleasant and congenial, and my husband candidated one Sunday morning. That went well...a good congregation and everyone was friendly, but it just wasn't the same. However, it was meant to be.

Time to move

The time came for us to move to our new location. The first Sunday came, we dressed in our best attire, went to church, and met some wonderful Christian people. Now a year and a half have passed. Time to grieve the loss and to make new friends, to become part of a new family, and learn to love some wonderful Christian people.

God in his infinite wisdom looks down upon us, understands, and provides. For me, I was given the opportunity to expand my church family and friends. I also have had many opportunities to witness about Him. I was also given the opportunity to keep employment with the same company, even though I had moved miles away. Thus, I have the best of both worlds.

Since my daughter works for the same company, we could commute together. What better way is there to maintain a close relationship than to spend time riding back and forth together.

My son came back to the area where I work and started teaching school. As family life is an important part of our lives, once again we've been blessed by living fairly close together and working in the same town.

How Great Thou Art

But perhaps best of all, with God's help, we've made the adjustment. Stored in our minds are wonderful memories that will never be erased. However, we've been given the opportunity to share God's love and his plan of salvation with some of God's special people. These people have included us as one of their own by loving us in spite of our faults, and together we are building some new and wonderful memories.

How true are the words of songwriter E. Gustae Johnson when he wrote, "...then sings my soul, my Savior God to Thee, How Great Thou Art, How Great Thou Art..."

Beverly is an alumna of Berkshire Christian College, a member of Garner Advent Christian Church, former president of Southern Region WHFMS, and serves as a Regent for Berkshire. She is the Executive Vice-president for Home Health and Hospice Care, Inc., Mt. Olive, North Carolina. She is married to Larry Withrow and they have two children.

Nursing Home Welcomes King's Jewels

On one rainy evening in May, eight King's Jewels children in Melrose, Massachusetts visited a nearby nursing home. That morning King's Jewels' leader Nancy Pritchard was surprised to find on her desk at work a canvas bag full of lovely stuffed animals! Her co-worker had cleaned out her home and wondered if Nancy could use them at her church. Nancy believed they had arrived just in time to be passed out to the elderly ladies in the nursing home that very evening. She wished she'd had a video camera as each child gave a stuffed animal to one of the residents. When God provides our needs, he gives "quality" — these stuffed animals were beautiful! The children had made paper baskets and filled them with gum drops for the ladies. The children sang the following songs to the 25 patients in their entertainment room: "This is the Day;" "Little David, Play on Your Harp," "There is Power in the Name of Jesus;" "He's Got the Whole World in His Hands;" and "Kum Ba Yah."

As we left the nursing home we thanked God for granting our desires to bring glory to Him as we prayed with and visited the lonely and sick. The children also learned about "giving" and "home missions."

You may want to ask your church family to donate their stuffed animals so the children's ministry of your church may share in a similar experience. It will be rewarding to watch the smiles on the faces of both the elderly and the young children!

Reported by Nancy Pritchard

Sifting and Shaking Retreat

President Margaret Holloman of the Salem WHFMS, Mount Olive, North Carolina affirms their objective of enjoying Christian fellowship through each activity of their local retreat was met and thirteen women benefitted. The day's events included: a breadmaking demonstration; devotions, testimonies, and prayer; two videos — "Sifting and Shaking" by Marilyn Hickey and "Country Curtains;" and an audio cassette, "Families are Funny," by Dr. Charles Petty.

Jewetts' Engagements

Letitia, Judy, Timmy, Danny, and Frank Jewett.

Frank and Judy Jewett, missionaries on leave from Cebu, Philippines, were the featured speakers for "Mission Day" at Plainville Camp, Plainville, Connecticut. The Westfield WHFMS women hosted a fellowship time in the Mission Cottage following the Jewetts' presentations. Two fall mission conferences are planned with the Jewetts as speakers. People in the vicinity are invited to attend one in Westfield, Massachusetts on September 18 and one in East Norwalk, Connecticut on October 22.

LaVerne Names Three Circles

The LaVerne, California women under the leadership of Melva Barth made an organizational change by naming three circles: Mary Circle, Martha Circle, and Evening Circle. Many of the women belong to all three. The Evening Circle is the administrative group and meets monthly for fellowship, prayer, and business. The Mary Circle meets Tuesday mornings for Bible study. The Martha Circle planned and carried out projects during the year such as: a Sweetheart Banquet, a prayer luncheon, a bake sale, the Mother and Daughter Luncheon, WHFMS Sunday program and international dinner, and a rummage sale. The theme of the Mother and Daughter Luncheon was *Reflections* and over fifty women explored new ways to look at themselves. The program featured the "Lightside Puppeteers" from Pomona carrying out the idea that "A merry heart makes a cheerful countenance."

First Conference Retreat

The twenty ladies who attended the Connecticut and Western Massachusetts WHFMS retreat at Coventry House received a great blessing and can't wait for next year's retreat reports President Ann Ball. The retreat leader was Sue Dowgiewicz, a vibrant, dynamic Christian who presented a "harvesting" workshop on how to locate non-Christians and allow them opportunities to accept Christ. An international student from Brazil shared about his country and his plans to return home and present Christ to his people. Kristin and Dirk Nims spoke regarding their plans to go to China as English teachers. Two delicious meals and praying and sharing times were added highlights of the day.

Torrington Women's Ministries

President Mary Lou Krauss invited all ladies of the church, their husbands (or boyfriends) to her home for a summer pot-luck picnic featuring homemade ice cream for dessert. Half the proceeds from the All-Church Tag Sale was designated for mission projects. We are happy to recognize this relatively newly reorganized WHFMS in Torrington, Connecticut.

Columbia Women

Allison Whittier (sister of missionary Floyd Powers) reports enthusiasm in the WHFMS meetings in Columbia, South Carolina. They plan their meetings an hour before the evening service and have between ten and twenty women attend. Recently they used the "mission spotlights" from the program kit, sang "Heavenly Sunlight" in Japanese, and used a slide presentation about our mission work in Japan.

Mother-Daughter Banquet

WHFMS President Karen King read selected poems about mothers, grandmothers, and daughers and recognized certain women with flowers. Twenty-three women of Attleboro, Massachusetts met at the Ponderosa Steak House for their banquet and program and enjoyed the food, fellowship, and flowers.

Christmas in October

Heart of Missions

Now is the time to plan for your Christmas in October promotion if you haven't already! Try something new this fall. Gather some brief nuggets about recent happenings and answers to prayer regarding our missionaries (Look in the *Prayer & Praise* bulletin, the *Witness*, and the *News.)* that you can share in the church bulletin, on a bulletin board, or publicly in a service. You may want to have some young people dress in costume of the countries where our missionaries serve and have them tell in a few sentences about how people in that country are responding to the gospel.

Please be aware of the facts. The Christmas in October bulletin inserts give specific information about how all monies are used. These bulletin inserts were mailed in August to each pastor for distribution in our churches.

The monies contributed go one hundred per cent for our missionaries. Some is sent directly to them as a special Christmas gift: $400 to each career missionary, $200 to retired missionaries, $100 to another category including short-term and self-supporting missionaries, $50 to missionary children. We also send gifts to our national missionaries in India, Malaysia, Mexico, and Nigeria. The remaining contributions to this fund are used for support of our retired missionaries, for the missionary pension fund, and for special medical costs for missionaries.

Here are quotes from letters of appreciation we received after last year's gifts were sent. First from career missionaries: "We were pleasantly surprised by the truly significant increase in our Christmas in October gift and do thank all of you." "The support of our Advent Christian people was brought clearly before us again when we received your more than generous C I O gift." And from retired missionaries: "The gift was just what I needed to pay my medical bill." "I was surprised to receive the extra amount and was able to buy a microwave and dishes to go with it."

CMM

Mission Prayer Partnership

SEPTEMBER

19 **Pray** for World Missions Director, **Harold R. Patterson** to have a safe return from his trip to Africa.

20 **Pray** for **Abel Garcia-Lara,** supervisor of our Mexico work that the Lord might strengthen him physically.

21 **Pray** for **Ever Perez** and **Arturo Angulo** and their ministry in Ensenada.

22 **Pray** for **Ezequiel Serrato** and his ministry in Mexico for the Lord and for us.

23 **Pray** for our college students as they study this fall that God would give them **His blessings** in their studies and speak to them concerning His will for their future.

24 **Pray** for **Executive Vice-president, David Northup** as he administers the work of the Advent Christian General Conference.

25 **Pray** for the **directors** at headquarters and regional superintendents as they meet in their annual retreat seeking God's wisdom and direction for their ministries.

26 **Pray** for the national pastors in **Nigeria** that God would give them strength for their ministry.

27 **Pray** for the work of the **Nigerian Advent Christian Conference** as they seek to start new churches.

28 **Pray** for our **chaplains** that God would use them to touch the lives of our servicemen.

29 **Pray** that the Lord would provide the many thousands of dollars needed to build new church buildings in **India.**

30 **Pray** for leadership for our pastorless **churches** in the United States.

OCTOBER

1 **Pray** for a successful and bountiful **Christmas in October** offering.
2 **Pray** for finance director, **Bob Cole** in the important ministry that he provides, managing our denominational funds.
3 **Pray** for **Alice Brown** that God would give her the physical strength to handle the great responsibilities that she has as director of Oro Bible College.
4 **Pray** for **Margaret Helms** in her ministry in conducting Bible studies in the greater Cebu area.
5 **Pray** for **Frank** and **Judy Jewett** as they continue in their deputation work, particularly in New England.
6 **Pray** for **Dave Vignali** as he tours the central regional churches on deputation sharing missions.
7 **Pray** for **Bruce Arnold** as he teaches English Bible studies in the greater Cebu area.
8 **Pray** for a special blessing on Japan's superintendent, **Floyd Powers** on this his birthday.
9 **Pray** for **Musa Powers** and her ministry among the churches in Japan.
10 **Pray** for **Austin** and **Dorothy Warriner,** as they continue their ministry at Askano, that God would greatly add to that church.
11 **Pray** for the **Devairakkams** and their family in their ministry at Kluang.
12 **Pray** for the **Davasahayams** and their ministry at Banting and neighboring rubber plantations.
13 **Remember Dora Raja** and the Tamil Bible Institute in prayer.
14 **Pray** for **Michael** and **Truda Gooding** as they minister in Hamilton, New Zealand.
15 **Praise** the Lord for new churches that started in the **Philippines.**
16 **Pray** for **Francis** and **Lynne Ssebikindu** and the growing work in Memphis.
17 **Pray** for **Reverend** and **Mrs. Lee Welkley** and their work in Jacksonville, Florida.
18 **Pray** for our Advent Christian brethren in **China.**

Integrity Not Optional **Continued from page 3**

and have already contributed eight volumes of my own toward the effort of clearing away the rubble left by the upheaval. But if I were asked today to formulate as concisely as possible the main cause of the ruinous revolution that swallowed up some sixty million of our people, I could not put it more accurately than to repeat: 'Men have forgotten God; that's why all this happened.' "

Solzhenitsyn's prophetic words apply not just to the Soviet Union but to our society, our churches, and our lives as well. So if we want renewal in our society, we need to start with ourselves. Do we as Christians practice integrity in our personal lives and in our churches? Do we remember that God is the focus of all we do, or, as Solzhenitsyn suggests, have we forgotten about God?

Advent Christians place great emphasis on their heritage and their distinctives. But I think the time has come to ask: Do we emphasize those things more than the lordship of Jesus Christ over all of life? Do we look at other organizations that have experienced scandal and say, "See, we're OK! There's no need to change?" And in Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn's words, "Have we forgotten about God?" ☐

Prophet Without Honor **Continued from page 11**

each church library would be blessed to have a copy. All too often teenagers who feel history is dull, and frequently adults who remember feeling the same way when they were in school, shy away from reading a "history." *Prophet Without Honor* is not "dull." Far from it! It's fun to read. It can intrigue Sunday school teenagers and new Advent Christians with their religious heritage and pleasantly remind old-timers from whence they came. "The Lord's coming is certainly nearer today that before!" ☐

Prophet Without Honor *can be ordered directly from Rev. Everett S. Ransom; R. 1, Box 20; Ferguson, North Carolina 28624. Cost is $6.00.*

Romans 3 Syndrome **Continued from page 23**

were dating. Send a card for no reason at all—maybe one that reminds you both of a special memory. Fix that leaky faucet!

A final warning: Do not be deceived into thinking that this threat is not present in your home. Recognize and understand that you and your spouse can fall prey to the devastating influence of the "Romans 3 Syndrome" at any time. A daily discipline of pleasing your mate will help you avoid joining the ranks of couples who are discouraged because they cannot live happily together. ☐

William Batson is pastor of the Portsmouth, New Hampshire Advent Christian Church and director of "The Family Builders," a teaching ministry dedicated to building stronger marriages and families.

"The Romans 3 Syndrome"

William Batson

The survival of our marriages is threatened by what Don Meredith, marriage counselor and author, calls "The Romans 3 Syndrome" (*Becoming One*, Thomas Nelson Publishers). This syndrome is described in Romans 3:10-18:

"There is no one righteous, not even one; there is no one who understands, no one who seeks God. All have turned away, they have together become worthless; there is no one who does good, not even one. Their throats are open graves; their tongues practice deceit. The poison of vipers is on their lips. Their mouths are full of cursing and bitterness. Their feet are swift to shed blood; ruin and misery mark their ways, and the way of peace they do not know. There is no fear of God before their eyes."

This passage describes the natural capacity we all have to sin. In a marriage, it is destructive. One minute you feel a great sense of love for your mate and the next you are harboring deep anger and resentment. Couples unable to control their capacity to sin will likely devastate each other as time goes on.

What's in it for me?

The "Romans 3 Syndrome" is rooted in the self-centered human nature. The spirit of the natural man is clearly the advancement of self. "What do I get out of this? What's in it for me?" There are people who say, "The reason I'm working and living is to have my needs met, my desires fulfilled."

Selfishness robs a marriage of its strength and vitality. A selfish person focuses on and becomes critical of another's weakness. One newly married husband did not wait for the honeymoon to end before unveiling his selfish nature. He took his bride by the hand and said, "Now that we're married, dear, I hope you won't mind if I mention a few little defects that I've noticed about you." "Not at all," the bride replied with a deceptive sweetness. "It was those little defects that kept me from getting a better husband."

A selfish person also displays a calloused insensitivity to another's needs and wants. Dennis Rainey tells of a classified ad that read as follows:

"For Sale: One 52-year-old husband. Never remembers anniversaries, birthdays, or special days. Seldom holds hands, hugs, kisses, or says, 'I love you.' Rarely is kind or tender. Will sell cheap — two cents. Call 555-0366. Will dicker."

The result of this kind of treatment, says Meredith, is rejection, mistrust, intellectual disrespect, or social embarrassment. Love quickly changes to hurt and hate. Positive, warm feelings for one another are gradually destroyed. A negative, critical, defensive, unromantic environment erupts. And the marriage death certificate reads: "Romans 3 Syndrome."

Handling the syndrome

This threat to our marital bliss can be minimized in a couple of ways. First, admit to the Lord and your spouse this capacity for selfishness and seek to have your thinking renewed by the power of the Holy Spirit and his Word. As your mind is transformed you will discover a greater energy for pursuing the next step: Focus your attention on your spouse and discover what pleases him/her.

Pleasing your spouse means you discover how to satisfy, make content, gratify, gladden, cheer, and delight him/her. In the seminars I conduct, participants are encouraged to ask their spouses the following questions which uncover vital information for being a partner pleaser: "What could I do to please you?"; "What three things really please you?"; and, "What things, if I do them, will communicate love, worth, and value from me to you?"

If you find that too risky, try a less direct approach. Listen for when your mate says, "I really like..." or "I wish sometime you would..." This will give you excellent material to start your efforts in pleasing your spouse. Also, you can observe your mate to see where he/she experiences repeated frustrations. Can you help in that area?

Need more help? Here are some partner-pleasing ideas that have been successful: Give your wife a break by taking the children out for a few hours. Leave her a love note under the pillow, in her purse or pocket. Arrange for an evening out for just the two of you. Do something for your husband that especially pleased him when you

Continued on page 22

Your Servants for Christ's Cause

International Missionaries

Philippines

Alice Brown (March 24)
P.O. Box 223
9000 Cagayan de Oro
PHILIPPINES

Margaret Helms (September 18)
P.O. Box 263
6000 Cebu City
PHILIPPINES

Frank and Judy Jewett
(December 11 and January 29)
Danny Jewett (June 13, 1976)
Timmy Jewett (June 26, 1978)
Letitia Jewett (April 13, 1980)
34 Main Street
Eliot, ME 03903

David Vignali (May 10)
P.O. Box 223
9000 Cagayan de Oro
PHILIPPINES

Bruce Arnold (June 21)
P.O. Box 263
6000 Cebu City
PHILIPPINES

Japan

Floyd and Musa Powers
(October 8 and February 28)
Rebecca Powers (Nov. 11, 1971)
4-11-18 Motoyama Kitamachi
Higashinada ku, Kobe shi 658
JAPAN

Austin and Dorothy Warriner
(January 1 and January 18)
3-37 Okayama Higashi
5 Chome, Shijonawate Shi
Osaka Fu 575
JAPAN

India

Marion Damon (March 27)
Box 17, Andivilla
Kodaikanal 624101
INDIA

Beryl Joy Hollis (December 16)
American Advent Mission
Velacheri, Madras 600 042
INDIA

Barbara White (January 14)
Box 17, Andivilla
Kodaikanal 624101
INDIA

National Missionaries

Malaysia

Thambusamy and
Victoria Devairakkam
3A, Jalan Sayang Housing Trust
86000 Kluang, Johor
WEST MALAYSIA

Lucas and Beulah Devasahayam
ıka

Selangor

Memphis

Francis and Lyne Ssebikindu
(May 13 and May 8)
Faith Nancy (September 28, 1982)
Ashley Grace (November 21, 1985)
2590 Faxon Avenue
Memphis, TN 38112

Mexico

Abel Garcia-Lara
368 Anita Street, Sp. 62
Chula Vista, CA 92011

Alberto Gomez
Arturo Angulo
Ever Perez
Ezequiel Serrato
c/o Abel Garcia-Lara

Nigeria

E.P. Etuk-Akpan — Secretary
Nigerian Advent Christian Mission
Ediene Ikot Obio Imo Headquarters
c/o Use Ikot Ebio P.A. Offot
Uyo Local Government Area
Akwa Ibom State
NIGERIA

Advent Christian General Conference
P.O. Box 23152
Charlotte, NC 28212

; World Missions
Christian Education
; Women's Ministries

Robert W. Cole; Finance
Robert Mayer; Publications
David Northup; Executive Vice-president

AC04848
University of North Carolina
Serials Dept Davis Library
080 A
Chapel Hill, NC 27514

C286.7 / A24

Advent Christian WITNESS

October 1988

GOD, LET'S TALK

FEATURES

God, Let's Talk 4
"The secret for satisfying communication with God rests not with style but with attitude," according to Advent Christian pastor and writer Clayton Blackstone.

How to Invite Someone to Church 8
Most of us want to invite our friends, neighbors, and associates to worship with us. Here's some practical help from a Canadian freelance writer on how to do it.

The Church Was So Crowded 12
In this interview, Advent Christian missionaries Frank and Judy Jewett share their call to serve Jesus Christ in the Philippines and how he has used their service to him there.

Is the Church Becoming Anti-semitic Again? 15
Pastor Les Lawrence discusses Christian attitudes towards Israel and explores questions relating to what the Bible teaches about the future of the Jewish people.

DEPARTMENTS

From the Editor 3

Women's Ministries 18

Prayer Partnership 21

Opinion 23

ON THE COVER:

People. The most important aspect of God's creation. We find fulfillment, joy, and hope in knowing God. According to Pastor Clayton Blackstone, "God creates us to enter into relationship with him. People must communicate to nurture relationship."

Volume 36, Number 9

Advent Christian
WITNESS

Editor **Robert Mayer**

Contributing Editors **Caroline Michael, Harold Patterson, William Batson, Clayton Blackstone, David McCarthy**

Typesetting **Susan Gettis** Proofreading **Shirley Brooks**

Art Director **Linda Perault**

The Advent Christian Witness (ISSN #007-740) is published monthly except for a combined July-August issue by the Advent Christian General Conference of America, 14601 Albemarle Road, P.O. Box 23152, Charlotte, N.C. 28212. Subscription rates in the United States and Canada: One year, $11.00. Single copy: $1.00. Overseas rate: One year, $14.00. Second class postage paid at Charlotte, N.C. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Advent Christian Witness, P.O. Box 23152, Charlotte, N.C. 28212.

As the official publication of the Advent Christian General Conference, the Advent Christian Witness publishes the teachings of the Advent Christian Church and promotes the task of evangelism both in North America and around the world. The views expressed in this magazine are those of the author and may not necessarily reflect those of the editor or the Advent Christian General Conference. Member: Evangelical Press Association. Copyright © 1988 by the Advent Christian General Conference of America, Inc.

FROM THE EDITOR

South Africa's Future: Marxist or Democratic?

Two years ago, South Africa was a fashionable topic. You couldn't turn on the evening news without news reports of violence and oppression in that troubled land. Calls for American companies to stop doing business in South Africa and divest themselves of all their South African holdings rang across a number of university campuses. Congress passed legislation imposing limited sanctions on travel, trade, and business with South Africa.

Now we don't hear much about South Africa. The reason for that I think is that sanctions and divestment have had exactly the opposite effect of what their proponents hoped for. Instead of weakening apartheid, sanctions and divestment have made the white minority government politically stronger. In addition, the financial void left by American industry has been filled by corporations from Japan and Europe. Unfortunately, many corporations from those nations don't share the commitment to political and economic justice for black South African workers their departed American counterparts did.

Christians can learn some lessons from this. First, economic sanctions usually hurt the people we're trying to help. Many if not most American corporations demonstrated a commitment for political and economic freedom for all South Africans. Their presence in South Africa placed pressure on the government to reform apartheid laws.

But even more important, we must learn that not everyone who opposes apartheid wants the best future for South Africa. Will that country emerge into a democratic society where all people experience political and economic freedom? Or will the future South Africa be a Marxist state where political and economic power rest in the hands of a few? If that happens, South Africans of all races will experience the hopelessness and despair faced by African nations like Ethiopia and Mozambique.

Two years ago, your editor wrote that apartheid is a morally evil, reprehensible system that must be ended. If anything, my conviction about that belief has become stronger. People in South Africa are suffering the denial of political freedom because of the color of their skin.

But bad policies, however fashionable they might appear at the time, only make matters worse. Economic sanctions, divestment, and other fashionable policies are morally reprehensible in that they hurt the very people they purport to help. And those who support those policies unwittingly support those who desire to turn South Africa into another Marxist Ethiopia.

Continued on page 22

Got a Reaction?

Has there been an *Advent Christian Witness* article that struck your attention. Perhaps you liked what the author said. Perhaps you want to take issue with a statement or conclusion. Why not write a letter to the editor. The *Advent Christian Witness* welcomes your letters. We only ask that they be no more than 150 words and that they address issues and not engage in personal attacks. Please include your name and address with your letter so that we can contact you if necessary. We'll publish letters to the editor every three to four issues, and we want to hear from you.

GOD, LET'S TALK

Clayton Blackstone

"Now I lay me down to sleep,
I pray the Lord my soul to keep,
If I should die before I wake,
I pray the Lord my toys to break
So none of the other kids can use 'em...
Amen."

Shel Silverstein's humor isn't funny...at least not if you think about it. In fact, it's down right convicting! Many of us feel guilty enough about the quality and quantity of our prayer lives. Another voice confronting our dis-ease only compounds our shame.

Prayer remains a puzzling contradiction to us. We know we should pray. We talk a great deal about praying. We, like the disciples, want to be taught how to pray. But we don't do it well, comfortably or, generally, very effectively.

The older I become, the more I realize how we've complicated this spiritual discipline. How we pray overshadows our attitude while we pray. The reversal is natural since our styles generally reflect the pattern of those in our lives who have greatly impacted our spiritual development.

Learning to relax in prayer

Some of us pray formally. Our method of expression drips with dignity. The phrases glow with Biblical language complete with King James English.

Others pray much more casually. We exchange the three piece suit for blue jeans and flannel shirts.

Some prefer sentence prayers. Some pray long and around the world. Others condense their prayers in a *Reader's Digest* version. Some pray intensely, their voices rising to a feverish pitch then descending into hushed tones of reverence. Others pray softly, barely mouthing the words.

And most of us like our style best! In fact, we often judge people by how they pray, as if spirituality depends on the ability to craft a moving prayer.

When it comes to style, let's relax! Our modes of communication vary greatly. We gesture differently, employ distinctive phrases, use unique facial expressions and speak with varying levels of intensity.

Prayer suffers from a mystical image, and I'd like to debunk the golden calf. The secret of satisfying communication with God rests not with style but with attitude. The rules which govern prayer rule conversation in general. Intimacy increases as certain attitudes mature.

"The secret of satisfying communication with God rests not with style but with attitude."

Jesus illustrated this premise in his Sermon on the Mount as he discussed various spiritual exercises during his sermon. The pompous style of the scribes and pharisees withered under the scrutiny of the Master Practitioner of Prayer:

"When you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by men. I tell you the truth, they have received their reward in full. When you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you. And when you pray, do not keep babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard of their many words. Do not be like them, for your father knows what you need before you ask him."

—*Matthew 6:5-8*

One-to-one conversation

Prayer, according to Jesus, is designed to be one to one conversation. The reasons appear obvious. God creates us to enter into relationship with Him. People must communicate to nurture kinship.

Once attitudes which detract from effective prayer lie exposed. Jesus illustrates his point by articulating a prayer which contains attitudes which enhance our communication with Him. The prayer follows a warning against vain repetition so it should not be viewed as magical formula to be repeated continually.

Recitation of the prayer fills us with nostalgia and warm feelings, but blind repetition locks the prayer in a vault, hiding its real beauty from the public eye. Absentmindedly mouthing the words drains our own prayer life of vitality by making an idol of the prayer.

His words ring with the comfort of a crackling fire on a cold winter night. "Our Father in heaven; Hallowed be your name." (vs. 9)

Before we venture further, notice the pronouns. The shift startles the unsuspecting pilgrim. "When you (singular) pray, pray 'Our (plural) Father...' " You'll not discover a single singular pronoun in the prayer.

Respect

Right from the start, the Master of the Art establishes the focus of

prayer: the Father in heaven not the pray-er.

To "hallow" the Father's name is to treat him with respect, to refuse to take him for granted, to acknowledge his uncommonness. Solomon's words echo in our memories as we reflect on these opening lines: "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom."

Several years ago, billionaire Howard Hughes occupied the top slot in the "Ten Richest Men in the World" listing. The eccentric died as he had lived...alone. In *Howard Hughes: The Hidden Years* we learn of the respect his vast riches failed to produce.

"Out in Las Vegas...the casino managers complied with the request of Summa's public relations director for a minute of silence out of respect for Hughes. The message went out over the public address systems, and for a brief moment the casinos fell silent. Housewives stood uncomfortably, clutching their paper cups of coins at the slot machines; the blackjack games paused; and at the crap tables stickmen cradled the dice in the crooks of their wooden wands. Then a pit boss looked at his watch, leaned forward, and whispered to the stickman, 'Okay, roll the dice. He's had his minute!"

No relationship prospers under such an absence of respect. Friendships deepen as respect grows. Friends may tease each other, but flippancy and rudeness poison comaraderie. Whether our style is casual or formal, the principal stands: *As respect for God grows, so does the friendship.*

"Your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven." (vs. 10)

No relationship prospers apart from a *willingness to set aside our personal agenda for the sake of our friend.*

Veto power?

Let's face it, we can be pretty selfish at times. We squirm at the truth. We, more often than not, really pray "My kingdom come." Like children, we demand veto power.

While on vacation a number of years ago, my wife Hazel sat on the floor playing with our children, ages 5 and 3. Each time she attempted to place a toy in its place, she was corrected. Finally the frustration oozed out. "Look! I'm not going to play any more if I can't have some say-so in how we do things. You want me to play but only if you can tell me exactly what to do!"

"Prayer, according to Jesus, is designed to be one to one conversation. The reasons appear obvious. God creates us to enter into relationship with Him. People must communicate to nurture relationship."

The old Jewish rabbis prayed, "Hear not, O Lord, the prayer of the traveler." The reason: travelers pray for fair weather even if the country needs rain for crops. The requirements of the majority often run counter to the desires of one.

Robert Raines writes in *Creative Brooding:*

"I am like James and John.
Lord, I size up other people
in terms of what they can do for me;
how they can further my program,
feed my ego,
satisfy my needs,
give me strategic advantage.
I exploit people
ostensibly for your sake,
but really for my own sake.
Lord, I turn to you
to get the inside track
and obtain special favors,
your direction for my schemes,
your power for my projects,
your sanction for my ambitions,
your blank check for whatever I want.

I am like James and John.

Change me, Lord.
Make me a man who asks of you and others, "What can I do for you?"

Both the Father and Jesus repeatedly demonstrate that friends give up things for friends. Selfishness strangles a relationship, dooming it to failure and us to unfulfillment. Our conversations in prayer should be smattered with evidence that what is important to God is important to us.

Dependence on God

"Give us today our bread for the day" (vs. 11).

Food, basic clothing, and shelter. "But I need this!" I hear the words almost as much as I say them. The more we have, the more we need...and the less we appreciate. As a general rule of thumb, the higher our income, the lower the percentage of money given to charity. Selfishness often shifts into high gear as our possessions accumulate. And the more we have, the less we need him.

Jesus slices through our spirit of

independence. We feel the pain as he skillfully cuts out the diseased tissue. We're a pretty independent bunch. We burst with pride at our accomplishments.

A man prayed beside his bed in the cartoon strip *Punch*, "Is there some way you could help me, but make it look like I did it all myself!"

Friends need their friends. Dependency goes down hard, but the patient cannot get better without swallowing the medicine. We may talk to God all we want, but an "I'm going to do it myself" spirit will keep the relationship locked in the infancy stage.

Learning to forgive

"Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors" (vs. 12).

Of all the things Jesus said which make me uncomfortable, this one unsettles me the most. These words seem to make our justification conditional. I prefer the interpretation which suggests that Jesus refers here to the experience of joy which comes when we really understand that we are forgiven. I find it difficult to be certain. I can't sort out "original intent" here.

But Jesus clearly advocates that *we must be willing to give forgiveness as well as receive it.*

On occasion tension develops between people because of strain in a relationship with a mutual friend. God cares about all his children. He doesn't play favorites. History is not just a record of God and me. When I treat others with insensitivity as if God and I are the only ones in the game. I place a barrier between myself and my Father.

Hypocrisy brands us when we refuse to give what we so energetically request from God.

Continued on page 10

Steps to a lasting relationship with God

Lasting relationships never develop overnight. They demand effort, the right conditions, and lots of TLA (that's "tender loving attention"). Here's a few suggestions which foster the maturing of the attitudes Jesus suggested in his model of prayer.

- **Relax:** Allow your relationship with the King of kings to progress at a natural pace. Any relationship takes time. Adjust to this reality, and you'll save yourself a sleepless night or two.
- **Journal:** I don't remember things well. Some call me forgetful. I prefer singleminded! I need some way to recall experiences of God's faithfulness, care, love, and grace and writing them in a journal is a good way. As these enter my life my confidence grows. The growth in the level of assurance yields the fruit of increased intimacy.
- **Observe:** The cliche suffers from overuse, but the truth bears recollection: stop to smell the roses. Last spring several folks in our congregation participated in *Chapel of the Air's* 50 Day Adventure. One of the daily disciplines: to look for God sightings. Sometimes spectacles as brilliant as the Milky Way grabbed our attention. On other days we became conscious of the twinkling flecks of grace which light the darkness of culture's night. Both enriched our appreciation of his goodness.
- **Listen to others:** Lately, I've come to miss the testimony services of a generation ago. Bennie Tompkins, Ernest Nutting, Gene Smith, and Read Blackstone are just names to you, but they form part of the fabric of my spiritual heritage. These faithful witnesses stood to their feet each time the opportunity presented itself. Specifics of their affirmations of faith escape me now, but their declarations encourage me to hold the course. The recollection of their words of quiet confidence, their tears of joy, and their faithfulness still the storm. I am at rest.
- **Focus on what we can bring to the relationship:** In *Restoring Your Spiritual Passion.* Gordon MacDonald talks about VDP's (Very Draining People) who sap our passion. These people require great amounts of our time and emotional energy. They demand much and give nothing. No matter how much is given, it is never enough.

Such impositions destroy the possibility of friendship. The potential for intimacy with God diminishes as we become VDP's to him. Treating our friendship as a ticket for prosperity drains life from the relationship. Friends lean on friends, but they don't use them!

- **Choose to set aside our personal agenda to meet the needs of a friend:** Few things wound me as deeply as the realization that one I counted a friend expends no effort to maintain the relationship. And nothing gives me greater joy than the knowledge that a friend has moved hell and high water to spend time with me.

An obsession with "our kingdom" impedes our relationship with the Father, because when we get together that's all we want to talk about.

"For the joy set before him" Jesus endured the cross. He considered friendship with us worth the cost. Suddenly, the price of intimacy doesn't seem quite so high. The cost of setting aside our personal agendas diminishes as the glory of his face emerges.

—*Clayton Blackstone*

How to Invite Someone to Church

Ingrid Shelton

Sylvia stared out the window at the house across the street where a moving van had just pulled up. "It looks like a young couple is moving in," she remarked to her husband, Ron, who was watching the morning news.

"That's nice," he murmured, without turning his head.

"I guess I better bake a cake to get acquainted," Sylvia said more to herself than to Ron. "I wonder if they're Christians or even if they go to church."

It was late afternoon when Sylvia dropped by with the beautifully decorated chocolate cake. "I'm Sylvia Potter from across the street," she introduced herself. "Welcome to our neighborhood."

"Thank you," smiled a dark-haired young woman. "I'm Margaret Brenner and this is my husband, Walter," she pointed to a tall, dark man moving boxes around.

"It's nice to get to know someone in this town so quickly," continued Margaret. "We just moved here from Denver."

"Oh, that's interesting," Sylvia said, thinking fast. She just had to find a way to invite them to her church. "I have a friend in Denver. She goes to First Church. Have you ever been to that church?" she asked, wondering if this was the right way to approach the subject.

"No," Margaret shook her head. "We aren't church people. At least I haven't been to church in years."

"Would you like to come to our church this Sunday?" Sylvia asked quickly. "It's just down on Second and Willow. I'm sure you'd be most welcome."

"We'll have to think about this," Margaret said politely. Anyway, it's nice of you to invite us and thank you so much for this lovely cake."

"Oh, that's fine," Sylvia turned to go. "Hope to see you in church this Sunday. It starts at 11 o'clock." She waved to Walter, then left quickly.

No surprise

On Sunday morning Sylvia looked thoughtfully across the street. The curtains were still shut and there was no sign of the new family up when she and Ron left for church. She did not see them at church but was really not surprised that the Brenners hadn't come. All the other neighbors she had invited previously hadn't come either.

"Maybe I should give the Brenners another invitation," she said

to Ron on the way home from church. "How else will they learn about Christ dying on the cross for their sins if they don't come to church."

"Give them a couple of weeks to adjust to our community," suggested Ron. "Then try again."

About two weeks later Sylvia obtained their new neighbor's phone number from the telephone directory, then called.

"We'd really be happy if you could come to our church this Sunday," she told Margaret after some pleasantries. "Our pastor is an excellent speaker. I'm sure you'd enjoy him."

"Oh," Margaret answered politely. "We'll try to make it soon. Thanks for the invitation."

"Great!" Sylvia sounded enthusiastic. "We hope to see you tomorrow."

When the Brenners were not in church that Sunday nor the following Sundays, Sylvia shrugged her shoulders and said to Ron, "I guess they just don't want to go to church. It's not priority for non-Christians."

As time went on Sylvia forgot about the Brenners. She was busy with her part-time job as well as with church activities and rarely thought about them.

However, about three months later Sylvia noticed that their new neighbors did go to church. Not to her church but to the Community Church across town. She watched the Morgans, the family who lived three houses away and who attended Community Church regularly, pick them up and bring them home again. And she saw them doing this for three Sundays in a row.

"I wonder what techniques the Morgans are using to get the Brenners to their church," remarked Sylvia to Ron one Sunday.

"It might be worthwhile to find out," suggested Ron.

Duty or love?

Sylvia determined to do just that. After an extensive visit with Jennifer Morgan, Sylvia realized that her attitude in inviting her new neighbors had been wrong. She had asked them to church out of a sense of duty. She was not really concerned about their spiritual welfare nor had she prayed for them. The Brenners had not sensed God's love for them in her nor found in her a caring friend. She had just ignored them when they hadn't come.

Quietly she asked the Lord to forgive her and to renew a right spirit within her. Through the Morgans, God showed her the following principles for church invitation which Sylvia was determined to apply to her and other unchurched friends and neighbors:

- *Befriend them:* Invite them to your home and allow them to detect a difference between a Christian and a secular lifestyle.
- *Pray for them:* Regular family and personal prayer allows the Holy Spirit to work in their lives and prepare them to receive spiritual things.
- *Invite them to church:* Offer to take them in your car. If they prefer to go separately, suggest they meet you in the foyer.
- *Make them feel welcome:* Sit with them. Introduce them to your friends and acquaintances.
- *Introduce them to your pastor:* Make your pastor aware that they are newcomers and perhaps could benefit from a home visit.
- *Keep inviting them:* Don't stop after they've attended once. Invite them again to Sunday services, to special meetings or church activities.
- *Keep being friendly:* Take them with you to special activities if they've indicated a desire to come. Keep introducing them to church members and friends.
- *Share your testimony with them:* When the Holy Spirit prompts you to do so or when they ask questions about church doctrine, tell them how you became a Christian and what Christ means to you.
- *Host a luncheon or tea in their honor:* Invite them and several of your church friends in their age group to your home so that they can get to know other Christians in a social setting.
- *Leave the results to God:* If they detect a caring, loving spirit in you and hear the Gospel message presented clearly, they will be drawn to Christ sooner or later and will most likely make your church their church home, too. □

Ingrid Shelton is a freelance writer living in Abbotsford, British Columbia.

Marvelous grace! Amazing grace! Wonderful grace! We spend hours counting it, fondling it lovingly, speaking its name softly. But give it...not on your life. Like the ungrateful servant, we throw such scum in prison for failure to pay a ten dollar debt, ignoring the magnitude of the forgiveness extended to us.

Such attempts at hoarding grace stifle our level of joy and impede communication with the Father.

Confidence in the face of trials

"And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one" (vs. 13). "But I thought God wouldn't tempt anyone?" The question is a fair one. The word Jesus uses here can be translated either temptation or trial. The request goes like this: "Father, if you will, spare me the test. But if I must pass through such waters, please spare me from the evil potential that is here."

John MacArthur's paraphrase captures the essence of Jesus' words concisely. But there's more here than just the words. An attitude of *confidence in the integrity of our friend* surfaces.

One cannot pray these words if he doubts the soundness of God's decisions or the integrity of his promises. Trust is essential to intimacy in any relationship.

If our confidence in God's integrity wavers, intimacy is threatened. We must believe that each experience which comes our way contains elements of gold. He allows it to stretch us. We feel, at times, the tenseness in the elastic of life. We can handle each test without breaking if we walk dependently with the resources he provides.

Henry Ward Beecher once observed that "If one should give me a dish of sand and tell me that

Continued on page 22

A graduate of Berkshire Christian College, Clayton Blackstone is pastor of the Advent Christian Church of New Hope in Lewiston, Idaho.

The Best Fishing Hole Around

John Gallagher

What if you and a group of friends found a huge lake no one else knew of? What if you discovered the fishing in this lake was fantastic? What if you decided to fish there every week? Every week, at the appointed time, you and your friends were there. The fishing was great, the company enjoyable; the fellowship good. You knew each other and how things operated when you were together. Then, one day someone suggested inviting others to come with them. He points out that the lake is large enough for others to come. New friends could be made. Maybe they would discover better fishing techniques. The upkeep of the lake would be a lot easier with the help of others. Besides, there were some people who needed a place to fish. Others were just lonely and could us their company. But...as they discussed the idea, they changed their minds. Things just wouldn't be the same. After awhile they might not know everybody. No...things might change too much.

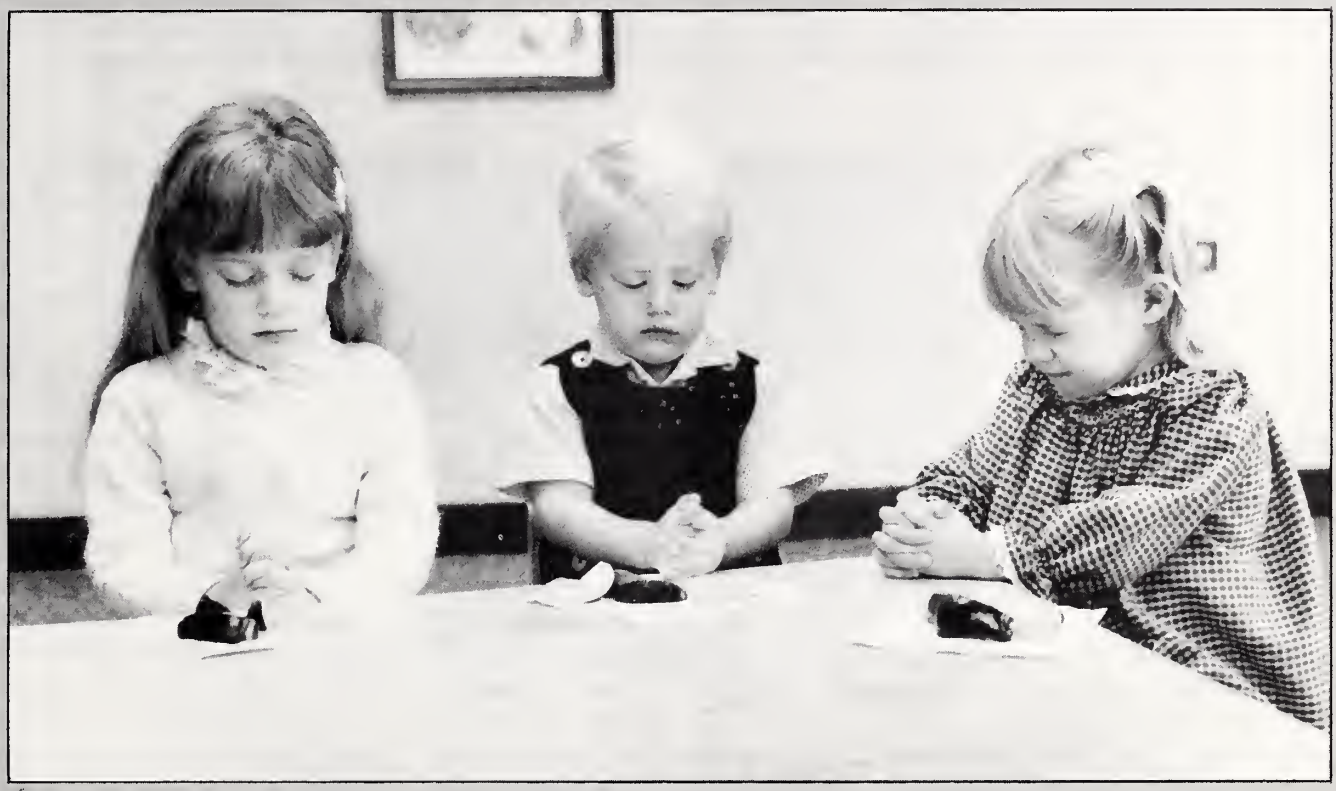
What if the church was treated like that fishing hole? Our church is growing and God wants it to grow. But, a growing church affects you. It also affects the newer people. In order to keep new people and reach others you must be prepared to accept them and make them feel like an important part of the church. At the same time, those who have been in the church need to continue to know they are needed. You can help keep the church growing and serve the Lord by doing a few things:

- Spend some time with the newer people. Have them over for a visit or go visit them.
- Make everyone feel appreciated and important!
- Send a note or card to someone.
- Be sensitive to those who are hurting and try to help.
- Expect change.

I'm glad our church isn't treated like a fishing hole. Aren't you?

A graduate of Berkshire Christian College and Luther Rice Seminary, John Gallagher is pastor of Shiloh Advent Christian Church in Monroe, North Carolina.

Biblical values have always been taught here.



Every Sunday, week in, week out, teachers rely on *Bible-in-Life* Sunday school materials to help them clearly show their students the difference between right and wrong, between respecting the rights of others and living entirely for oneself, between honoring God's laws and ignoring them. *Bible-in-Life* literature helps teachers stress those timeless, changeless values that help build a God-fearing nation, and will help build the character of young people for generations to come.

Bible-in-Life materials can help you teach the Biblical value of faith . . . the value of honesty . . . the value of obedience . . . thankfulness . . . purity . . . love . . . . Life Curriculum can help you tell the value of knowing that Jesus Christ is the Lord of life. There is no more important value. To those of you who share the same mission and have chosen Advent Christian materials to help you accomplish it, we say thank you. To others, we invite you to join us in our quest. Send for your free *Bible-in-Life* samples today!

Bible-in-Life *Sunday school materials are produced by the David C. Cook Publishing Co. who have helped teach Biblical values for over 110 years.*

Free Sunday School Curriculum Samples. Check any or all departments below.

☐ Nursery ☐ Kindergarten ☐ Primary (1-2) ☐ Primary-Junior (3-4)
☐ Junior (5-6) ☐ Junior High ☐ Senior High ☐ Adult

Name _____ Position _____
Church _____
☐ Church
☐ Home Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
☐ Church
☐ Home Phone No. _____ / _____

Send to: Dept. of Christian Education, P.O. Box 23152, Charlotte, NC 28212

An interview with Frank and Judy Jewett

"The church was so crowded..."

Missionaries Frank and Judy Jewett completed their first term of service earlier this year. Stationed in the Cebu area of the Philippines, Frank, Judy, and their family saw first hand the openness of Filipino people to the gospel of Jesus Christ. The *Advent Christian Witness* asked Frank and Judy to reflect on the many experiences of their Philippines service in the interview that follows:

Frank and Judy, when did you first become interested in missions?

Frank: In 1973, I attended Urbana Student Missions Conference, sponsored by InterVarsity, while a freshman at Berkshire Christian College. At Urbana, on one of the final nights, a challenge was given to consider missions, and a card was passed out. I'm not sure what I wrote but I think it was something to the effect that whatever God wanted to do with my life I was willing to follow even if that would take me into missions.

Judy: My first interest came when Frank was already pastoring at Deer Isle, Maine. I was teaching a Sunday school class for the younger children and the curriculum focused on missions. As I taught, my prayer was: "Lord, let this minister so that one of these kids will come to the point where, when they grow up, they will want to be a missionary." While I was praying, God seemed to be speaking to me — "What about you, Judy? Would you be willing to go? What if I came back before these kids have a chance to grow up, would you be willing to go?" That started my interest in missions.

When did you sense that your interest in missions was becoming a firm call from God to pursue mission service?

Frank: I think it was in autumn 1982, after the Lord was leading us to consider missions, because of Judy's Sunday school class. After praying about it someone suggested we call then Director of World Missions Ed Hickel at the denominational office.

He had just returned that day from a trip to several mission fields.

We asked him, "What was the most important mission prayer concern that our church could be praying about?" I hadn't told him I was interested in missions yet. He responded, "Would you please pray for the Philippines. We are looking for someone, preferably a pastor and his wife, to go to the Philippines to be church planters."

He did not know, but we were calling to ask, "Could God use a pastor and his wife in mission work?" We had originally hoped we might go to India, but Ed shared that the doors to India were closed. There was no possible way we could get to India, but would we please consider the Philippines. After that phone call, because he was looking for us and had answered our question before we had even asked him, we felt like that was God calling us. That was confirming to me.

You've finished your first term in the Philippines. What have been the highlights of your service

there?

Judy: We went there as church planters and to actually see that goal come into being, to see God using us to plant a church stands out as a highlight. That church stands today with a Filipino pastor in leadership.

Frank: Even though that church is not organized officially, it can meet all the required standards for the Philippine conference.

One of the highlights for me was when we called the pastor. His letter came to our house saying, "Yes, we accept a call to be leaders of this fellowship." That was a highlight in my life.

What do you sense that God has been teaching you personally during your time in the Philippines?

Judy: To put Jesus first, keep our eyes fixed on Him and everything else would fall into place. He also taught me that our main objective, our goal in life, should be praise and worship of Him.

Frank: In 1986, the Lord began teaching me much about prayer and that if we pray specifically, God wants to answer specifically. Also I agree with Judy that learning how to worship God in song, learning how to worship Christ as King, puts everything else in its proper perspective. I think we have learned more about the work of the Holy Spirit than we had ever known before we left home. We've seen, heard, and experienced beautiful things that God has done.

We are desirous of bringing that same kind of dependence on the Spirit back with us during our furlough to help others catch that same vision. We can have that same dependence on the Holy Spirit here in the United States and Canada as we can across the sea. We hope to portray that during our furlough.

What other activities were you involved with besides church planting?

Judy: I had a Bible club that met at the international school in Cebu, where our boys attended. I participated as a Bible teacher in that club for the first year we were there. When the woman who had been leading it went home on furlough, I took over the coordination of that Bible club.

Frank: I was involved in PTA at the same time and I served as president of that PTA for a year. I also led a Bible study in a bank with some bank officials.

I was involved in Rotary as a contact point for meeting other people. That opened a door for ministry with some of the men from Rotary. I also started a Bible study with one of the Rotarians. He became a part of our church, and moved his family near our church so he could be part of the ministry there.

Several in our church are there because of our work at a tennis club a short walk from our house. As a matter of fact, our first contacts were probably from the tennis court right there in our neighborhood.

When you look back is there a place, a person, or event that stands out in your mind as being significant?

Judy: One of the fellows that Frank had been discipling named Boy Rafanan had contact in the area where Socorro lived. They started having a Bible study in her home.

She had two little boys, one about three years old and one just an infant less than a year. The infant was sick all the time. One day when the baby was sick with a high fever and an ear infection, she left her babies with her mom and went to the Catholic church just down the street from her house. When she got there the church was so crowded that she could not get inside. Standing outside of the church, she remembered what Boy told her in Bible study. She didn't leave to go through the saints, and she didn't have to go through Mary. She didn't have to go through the Catholic Church, but she could go to God directly herself and so she said, "I'll put it to the test. I'll try it."

So outside of the church she prayed for her little boy. When she returned home her baby was completely healed. He had no more fever and his ears were completely healed. When she shared this story in Bible study she said, "All these years I thought I had to go through the saints, I had to go through Mary, how come no one ever told me sooner that I could come to Jesus myself?"

Would you recommend missionary service to Advent Christian young people today who might be thinking about what they want to do with their lives?

Frank: Yes, I would also suggest that if a young person is interested in missions work that he would find or get some skill in an area even before he goes. For us it was good to know that Advent Christian missions needed someone who had experience as a pastor and knowing what they wanted, that was helpful to me.

You're saying that it would be good for somebody to get professional or vocational training as they consider serving in the mission field?

Frank: I'm not sure how to say this because I don't want *Witness* readers to think they can't go to the mission field just the way they are. But if you sense God leading you to missions service, ask Harold Patterson what kind of people do they need. Then, consider training and developing some specific skills before you go. That was helpful for us.

I wonder how our experience would have been if we had shown up on the mission field fresh out of college. We would have had to go through culture shock and a variety of different things. But knowing that our job focused on church planting made for a smoother transition and gave us goals and direction. I found that helpful. I would encourage anyone seriously considering missions service to get an idea of what kind of missionary they want to be even before they start.

Judy: I would suggest, too, that someone pursuing missions obviously needs a love for the Lord and a concern for the lost. But I'd also suggest that people look at their own personality to see if they enjoy being around people. Because at least in the Philippines, you have people at your doorstep, in your home, looking in your windows, all the time. If you don't have a love for people, it's going to be hard having any kind of an effective ministry. Love for people must be high on a missionary's list of priorities.

Frank: If you want to have a stretching experience, if you are looking for excitement, if you are looking to be part of a ministry where people want to grow and learn about the Bible, you won't find anything better than serving on a mission field like the Philippines. Statistics say that you can begin a church in Manila in eighteen months.

We have found the Philippines a stretching, exciting place to be. If a young person or an older person as well wants to be in a place where they will be stretched to grow in the Lord themselves, the mission field is highly recommended.

You've mentioned that the Filipino people seem very open to the Gospel, maybe much more so than the people in the United States or Canada. Why do you think that is the case?

Judy: Time and time again we have people approaching us asking, "Do you have a Bible study? I understand you are here to teach about the Bible. Can I come?"

Frank: I think there is a "mystery" about the Bible that intrigues people in the Philippines. They have high respect and admiration for the Bible because of their Roman Catholic culture, but they don't know what is in it. People are interested in knowing what it means to be born again. They're very interested in these churches that are growing rapidly. Exciting things are happening and because the Filipino people are religious by nature, they are looking for the truth. And when you begin sharing the Bible with them, they are intrigued by that and they accept what they hear. They are open and they seem to want to be obedient to whatever the Bible says.

Judy: We always tell people, "Don't accept something just because we say it is so, look in the Bible yourself. If the Bible disagrees with what we are saying, then don't listen to what we are saying. You listen to what the Bible is saying." We've noticed that people tend to accept what we are saying because we were the ones saying it. That's not right.

Frank: Early in our ministry, we saw people accepting the authority of the Bible, and that opens a door for Jesus to begin changing their lives. Because the Filipinos are a religiously oriented people, they are looking for the truth, and the Bible shows them what real truth is. As they come to the truth, you see the smile come on their face. Reality comes to their lives through Jesus Christ and changes begin taking place in relationships, in all areas of life. It's exciting to see God change lives.

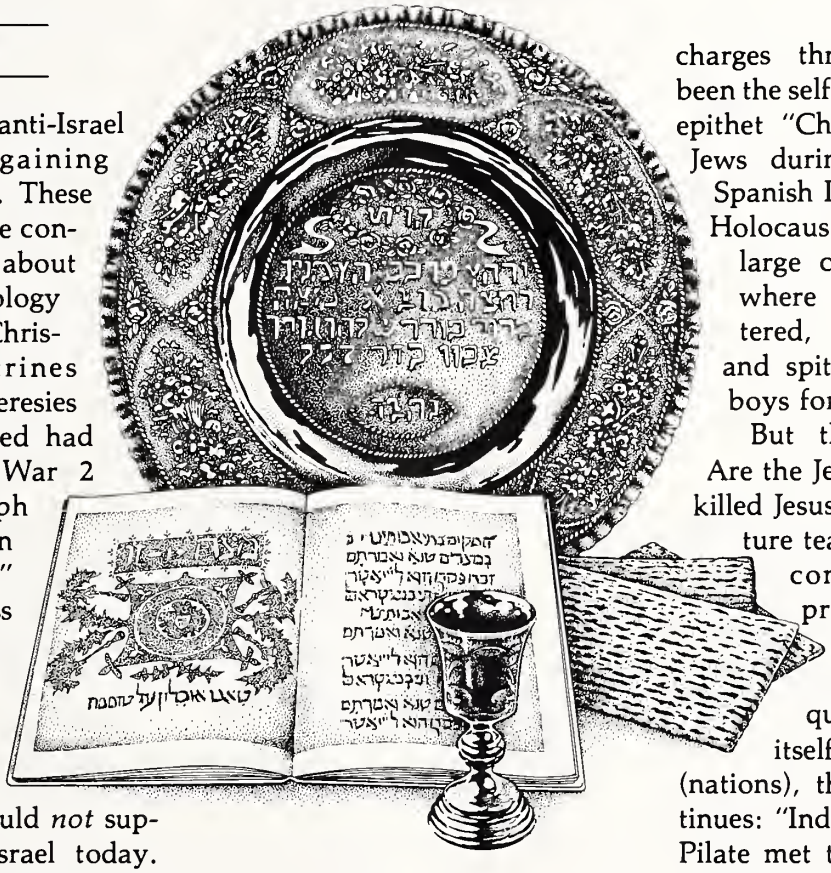
One final question. Not everyone is called to go to the mission field. For those of our readers who are not called to go to the mission field, what are some things they can do to be supportive of your efforts and be supportive of missions?

Judy: Continue to support and be involved in your local church,

Continued on page 17

Is the Church Becoming Anti-Semitic Again?

Les Lawrence



A new wave of anti-Israel theology is gaining credibility in America. These beliefs have raised some controversial questions about Israel, shaking the theology of many American Christians. These doctrines reiterate some of the heresies that many of us hoped had died in that World War 2 bunker with Adolph Hitler and his "solution to the Jewish problem."

Purporting to discuss "the Biblical basis for the church's support of national Israel," they instead proceed to detail why they believe the church should *not* support the nation of Israel today. They use Scripture to defend their case, but in my opinion, they twist the Bible to once again give homage to tired old arguments better left in the Dark Ages.

Three topics in particular deserve to be examined: Do the Jews *alone* hold the guilt for killing Christ Jesus? Did God thereafter divorce His Jewish bride and marry the church as a second wife? Is God through with Israel today as a chosen, unique covenant people? The heresy suggested in these three questions may not be immediately apparent to all, so please allow me to explain. The first question of Israel's singular guilt potentially undermines our basic doctrine of sin. The next issue of the two brides would have God as a polygamist or having divorced a first wife and remarrying a different bride. The third issue questions the nature of God as the One who *keeps* His covenants. These challenges to Biblical orthodoxy are worthy of further scrutiny.

Are Jews alone responsible for Christ's death?

Look closely at the first. Are the Jews *alone* responsible for Jesus' death? One of the most heinous charges throughout history has been the self-righteous and arrogant epithet "Christ-Killers!" hurled at Jews during the Crusades, the Spanish Inquisition, and Hilter's Holocaust. In the ghettos of any large city around the world where Israel has been scattered, young Gentiles mock and spit upon young Hebrew boys for the same reason.

But the question remains: Are the Jews *alone* the ones who killed Jesus? What does the Scripture teach? Consider what the company of believers prayed in Acts 4:27 upon the release of Peter and John. Having first quoted Psalm 2, which itself implicates the Gentiles (nations), the prayer to God continues: "Indeed Herod and Pontius Pilate met together with the Gentiles and the people of Israel in this city to conspire against your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed" (Acts 4:27-28).

There are two undeniable facts here stated. First, that *both* Jew and *Gentile* killed Christ. Secondly, it was the purpose of God! Paul warns Gentiles in Romans 11:18 speaking of the Jewish branch temporarily broken off: "do not boast against the branches." Continuing in verses 20 & 21 he warns further: "Do not be haughty, but fear. For if God did not spare the natural branches, He may not spare you either." Some Christians would

judge and punish the Jews. Nowhere are we given that assignment. The sovereign God has reserved that right to Himself. He is the only one to vindicate His plan, and He has everything under control. He knows that we are all guilty before Him and His final word is: "Vengeance is mine, I will repay! says the Lord" (Romans 12:19). Our plea should be for mercy both for ourselves and for the Jewish people.

Did God divorce Israel?

The second major question is about the bride of Christ. The new wave theology in question does not dispute the fact that Israel was God's wife in the Old Testament. They contend that God has broken His marriage covenant with his Jewish bride because of her unfaithfulness and sin. The notion says that God having put away His first wife, is now preparing a new bride, which is the church.

Yet Jesus himself says that Moses only permitted divorce "because of the hardness of your hearts" (Mark 10:5). God's heart is not hardened! Hosea reveals the classic illustration of God's heart toward Israel. The anti-Israel view has God divorcing Israel as Hosea divorced his adulterous wife. This is true, but what is overlooked is the end of the story! In the end, both Gomer and Israel are restored. Read about it in Hosea 2:14-3:5 and 14:1-9. So, God is faithful even when we are not! He is able to save to the uttermost all those who call on Him! He is the Redeemer, the One who keeps His promises. Don't make Him like one of us. God is not made in man's image. He wants to raise us higher to be like Him through Jesus.

In Romans 11, Paul quotes Isaiah 59:20 saying God will yet keep His covenant with Israel to "turn away ungodliness from Jacob!" The name Jacob is used so it is absolutely clear that God is talking about the natural Jewish descendants of Abraham. "And if they do not persist in unbelief, they will be grafted in, for God is able to graft them in again. After all, if you were cut out of an olive tree that is wild by nature, and contrary to nature were grated into a cultivated olive tree, how much more readily will these, the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree! I do not want you to be ignorant of this mystery, brothers, so that you may not be conceited: Israel has experienced a hardening in part until the full number of the Gentiles has come in. And so all Israel will be saved, as it is written: 'The deliverer will come from Zion: he will turn godlessness away from Jacob. And this is my covenant with them when I take away their sins.' As far as the gospel is concerned, they are enemies on your account; but as far as election is concerned, they are loved on account of the patriarchs, for God's gifts and his call are irrevocable" (Romans 11:23-29).

This great verse 29 about God's gifts and calling being irrevocable has been preached by many over the centuries and applied to a host of different situations: personal, family, church, denominational, and even national. However, the literal textual application is specifically applied to natural Israel! God has *not* permanently divorced her. She is destined to be forgiven and restored! Hallelujah!

Why does it matter to us?

Let us turn now to the third and final question. Why would the doctrine of the permanent rejection of national Israel threaten us? Well, if God said He would keep His covenant to a thousand generations, (which He did in Psalm 105:7-11), then how good is God's word? If God could give promises to Israel and break them, then why should we have confidence that He will keep His word to us? The very doctrine of the nature of God is at stake.

You may say: "But, Jesus died for us and the Holy Spirit has sealed our salvation!" Of course this is true, but we know it and accept it by *faith!* What if God decided to change His mind? Could we appeal for Him to keep His word based on our character or works? Certainly not! For that matter, who could appeal to a God who could not be trusted?

Now do you see how unfounded and dangerous it is to suggest that God broke His covenant with Israel? God's very essence is that of a covenant keeper. It is man who cannot be trusted! "Let God be true and every man a liar" (Romans 3:4). Let us pray for Israel that God would forgive their sins, open their eyes to Messiah Jesus and totally restore them to their land and their God! Isaiah predicts the coming of Jesus as Messiah in 11:10 and in verse eleven says that the Lord shall bring back Israel "the second time" and in verse twelve says "from the four corners of the earth!" This is now being fulfilled. Praise the Lord Jesus!

Ezekiel's vision of the dry bones in chapter 37 saw the bones come together *before* receiving their life-

breath. Israel is now being gathered as dry bones. Today's question is the same. "Can these bones live?" It is my deep conviction that we are living in the generation of the salvation of Israel. It has begun!

If God supernaturally reveals Jesus as Messiah to Israel in these last days, what are we going to do? The answer is in the wisdom of Acts 15 where the council wrestled with "the Gentile problem." What were they going to do about Gentiles being saved? Did they need to be Judaized? You see, most believers then were Jews. The answer was a clear *no*. It was enough that they receive Jesus, "avoid immorality, and abstain from idols." Today, almost all believers are Gentile and we are about to face the same problem in reverse. As more Jews are saved we will have to face the question: Do Jews need to be "gentilized" and become culturally Gentile in order to be saved? The wise answer once again will be: *no*. It's enough that they receive Jesus as Messiah. They are *not pagans* if they worship the God of Abraham, Issac, and Jacob. They do not need to renounce their God and convert to a "Christian God." He is the only God and Jesus is the only Messiah. They need not renounce Judaism but they must accept Jesus who said: "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No man comes to the Father except through Me" (John 14:6). Pray for the real peace of Jerusalem! □

A graduate of Berkshire Christian College, Les Lawrence is Senior pastor of Maranatha Chapel Advent Christian Church in Clearwater, Florida. He speaks frequently regarding God's end-time purposes for the nation of Israel as southeastern representative of Christian Friends of Israel.

"The church was so crowded..." **From page 14**

because it is through the local church that we are supported as missionaries. It is through the local church that they will be aware of our needs—prayer needs and otherwise.

I'd also challenge them to become burdened to reach their neighborhoods for Christ. We like to draw a map of our neighborhood. Whenever we discover the names of the people, we put their names inside the little houses on our map. We pray for that neighborhood and begin praying for those people by name. Then, learn to pray specifically for their salvation and their needs. When we first arrived on the mission field, I met another missionary who had been there for eight years. I would tell her how many letters I had to write because people in Advent Christian churches wrote to us. She said, "Oh, don't worry about that, after six months or so people are going to forget you are even here and you won't get letters." That has not been true in the Advent Christian Church. We have felt so much support from the Advent Christian people. We always got cards and notes, and those things mean so much when you are away from home, from your family, and in a different culture. It means so much to hear from people back home. So please continue with those things, too, because they make a difference.

Frank: Keep on praying, because God is answering prayers. We have a church in Cebu because we as Advent Christians have all worked together. □

IMPACT THE FUTURE
through Christian Education

1988 NAE Congress on Christian Education
November 14–16, 1988
Pheasant Run Resort
St. Charles, Illinois

Featured speakers include:
- James F. Engel
- Mancil Ezell
- Kenneth O. Gangel
- Leslie Parrott
- James E. Plueddemann

- Up-to-date exhibits
- Daily Bible study sessions
- Warm Christian fellowship

For registration information
NCEA, DM, P.O. Box 28
Wheaton, IL 60189
(312) 665-0500

Caroline Michael
Director

10 Steps to Get You Started

How to Make WHFMS Attractive

Gloria Wright

1. **Meet together as a group and pray.** Matthew 7:7, "Ask, and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you." The first step is to seek God's direction. Ask God how this group can best serve Him in your church. Wait for the answer by allowing the Holy Spirit to direct you as a group. Search the Scriptures for His plans for you.

2. **Evaluate your existing program.** Perhaps your WHFMS meetings leave something to be desired. Ask yourselves these questions:

- Is the program ministering to the needs of the women in our church?
- Is the time of meeting appropriate for the majority of the women attending? for those not attending?
- Are the meetings appealing, interesting, and informative?
- Is the business long and boring?
- Do you see areas that can be improved?

Maybe a few changes will make the difference!

3. **Establish the purpose of the group.** Make sure that everyone who attends understands and knows what the group is about. Explain the organization of WHFMS, its purpose and its function.* If the members are not sure of what is happening, a newcomer may not get the picture.

4. **Set specific goals for the group.** Goals are essential. If goals are being accomplished, it's obvious that the group is progressing. If there are no goals, it's difficult to notice growth. When setting goals, be realistic, but don't be afraid to incorporate new ideas or change.

5. **Be supportive and enthusiastic.** Colossians 3:23, "Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men." As members of this group it is your responsibility to attend meetings. In order to encourage others to come, you must show a genuine concern and interest in the group. Share with those who don't come, or those who don't come regularly, some of the things that are taking place in your WHFMS.

6. **Come prepared.** Ephesians 4:16, "From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work." No matter if you hold an office, present the program, or supply refreshments, take time to prepare yourself to be ready to carry out your part even if you don't feel like it. Remember others are relying on you. Don't let them down.

7. **Be open to change; don't get caught up with tradition.** Change the format of the program occasionally to keep it interesting and progressive. Invite special speakers in or have special features from time to time. Advertise through your church bulletin, newsletter, or bulletin board. Invite those who are not coming by sending out special invitations, by making phone calls, or offering to provide transportation.

8. **Be a willing member.** Philippians 4:13, "I can do everything through him who gives me strength." Don't let that feeling of inadequacy keep you from the blessings that God has in store for all who are willing to serve Him wherever possible. Remember we can do *all* things through Christ.

9. **Encourage one another.** 1 Thessalonians 5:11, "Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing." Make sure the group is meeting the needs of each woman: emotional, spiritual, and social needs. Get to know one another. Work together as a group and establish open and honest relationships which will help each member grow spiritually.

10. **Above all, keep Christ at the center of the group.** Colossians 3:1-3, "Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things.

For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God."

**Information is available in the Women's Ministries brochure, the* Organization of a Local WHFMS, *and in the National Handbook of WHFMS ($2). Request these from Department of Women's Ministries, P.O. Box 23152, Charlotte, NC 28212.*

Gloria is a member of the Bear River, Nova Scotia Advent Christian Church, a Trained Resource Person, and the President of her WHFMS. She works part time as a child-care counselor with the mentally handicapped. Gloria and her husband have four children.

Wanted, World Christians

A special day-and-a-half were spent at Alton Bay, New Hampshire considering the theme, "Wanted, World Christians." Women from all over New England, New York State, and from Canadian Provinces came together at the 41st annual Eastern Region WHFMS Convention. On Thursday afternoon David Adams gave an informative talk on missions in the Soviet Union titled, "The Suffering Church," followed by Mary Walegir speaking on "Miracles on the Volga River."

After a delicious banquet served by the Alton Bay Christian Conference Center staff, Mary Whitford of North Scituate, Rhode Island was the guest speaker. The following morning Mary's devotions featured "Missions Around the World."

Director of World Missions Harold Patterson of Charlotte, North Carolina, who had just returned from visiting Advent Christian mission stations in India and Malaysia, provided an update on Advent Christian missions. Missionaries on leave from Cebu, Philippines, Frank and Judy Jewett, shared insights of their work with the Filipinos during their first term and also what God has been teaching them.

Barbara Schaeffner presided over the business sessions and the following officers were elected: President Barbara Schaeffner, Vice-president Joanne Tompkins, Secretary Alma Lampard, Treasurer Jane Sturdevant, and Children's Ministries coordinator Nancy Pritchard.

After a mid-afternoon break to shop or do a craft project, dinner was served before a mini-concert by Becky Leach and the evening service featuring Frank and Judy Jewett.

Thanksgiving for Rain

The Bible clearly teaches that, at least in Old Testament times, there was a close relationship between the spiritual condition of the people and the weather. Sin brought physical punishment in famine, plagues of insects, and storms.

In 1 Kings 8:35,36 we read, "When the heavens are shut up and there is no rain because your people have sinned against you, and when they pray toward this place and confess your name and turn from their sin because you have afflicted them, then hear from heaven and forgive the sin of your servants, your people Israel. Teach them the right way to live, and send rain on the land you gave your people for an inheritance."

America must turn back to God! We must listen to the voice of the Lord our God, to observe to do all his commandments and His statutes, so that all Biblical curses shall not overtake us.

Ohio, no one will deny, has suffered a terrible drought. Many have prayed for rain — churches, groups, and individuals. God has honored our requests! July 18 and 19 we experienced a downpour of blessing! Rain! And we've had several showers since.

—Reported by Betty Bockover
President of Ohio WHFMS

TRP Workshop Result

Recently Trained Resource Person Camille Turner presented the TRP workshop, "How to Increase Membership" at her church in Ridgeland, South Carolina. One of the actions initiated by the workshop was to edit a column in the pastor's monthly newsletter. This column informs the congregation of current projects and asks the membership to get involved in these service opportunities. Presently one project is for nursing home patients and another is for Advent Christian missionaries. They also announced plans for WHFMS Sunday, invited the congregation to a spaghetti supper before the service, and encouraged all ladies to attend their next monthly WHFMS meeting.

CONNIE JONES
902 Hemlock Dr. NE, Lenoir, NC 28645

Your Life: A Question of Ownership

Connie Jones

This year we acquired a cottage on the grounds of the Appalachian Advent Christian Camp in Blowing Rock, North Carolina. As the roof leaked in several places, in early June Jack and the boys went up with some friends and recovered it. The paint outside was flaking off. Jack scraped it, and our three girls painted it with a lovely beige coat. Inside, Jack pieced together some second hand carpet and covered the concrete floors. I found some old curtains and scraps of material and worked at new coverings for the windows. Not to be outdone, Mother bought some plants and started a little flower garden. "Fixing up camp" became a family project which drew us all together.

My parents had rented this cabin for a month or two for several summers. During that time, we made a few small changes, but we did not feel free to do much. Now, inside and outside, it has become a different place. Ownership made the difference. Fixing up the house became our responsibility as well as our privilege.

As I thought over our summer's activities, I suddenly found myself remembering these verses of Scripture, "Do you know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body," (1 Corinthians 6:19,20).

When God paid the price and stamped His ownership on me, He assumed the privilege of changing my appearance both in my outside body and in my inner spirit. They are His, and they are to reflect his glory and his personality. What an exciting thought: God wants to remold me just like I want to fix up our cabin! Realizing all the power and riches God has at his command I wondered, "Why is it taking so long? Why am I not more like my owner and the design He has for me?"

Have you ever wondered about your Christian life? Have you been dissatisfied with your remodeling job? Perhaps you know another Christian woman who

exemplifies for you the true Christian spirit and you've wished that God would make you more like her. That isn't how it works! God has a design for each one of us that is uniquely our own and which will result in our looking more like Him. We are not to be discouraged. In Philippians, Paul tells us we can be confident of the fact that He will perform this good work in us until the day of Jesus Christ.

Our remodeling continues, day after day, year after year, as Christ takes over our lives and makes them His dwelling place. Are there any snags? Probably it's a question of ownership. How much did you really turn over to Him? How much did you keep back? Perhaps we can tell if we review our lives and see which areas show self instead of Christ. The work is God's. Let's help Him by turning over all the keys. □

How Mission-Minded is Your Family?

1. Our family has personal friends who are missionaries. Yes ( ) No ( )
2. Our family prays for one or more missionary families regularly. Yes ( ) No ( )
3. Our family has missionaries stay in our home when possible. Yes ( ) No ( )
4. Our family discusses world events with reference to missionaries. Yes ( ) No ( )
5. Our family uses the "Mission Prayer Partnership" column from the *Advent Christian Witness* in our prayer time. Yes ( ) No ( )
6. Our family reads the articles on missions in the *Advent Christian News*. Yes ( ) No ( )
7. Our family makes a sacrificial gift to the Penny Crusade annually. Yes ( ) No ( )
8. Our family contributes annually to the Christmas in October fund. Yes ( ) No ( )
9. Our family discusses Bible passages with mission implications from time to time. Yes ( ) No ( )
10. Our family knows the countries where we have Advent Christian missionaries and the location of these countries on the globe. Yes ( ) No ( )
11. Our family knows the names of the international and national missionaries listed on the back cover of the *Advent Christian Witness*. Yes ( ) No ( )
12. Our family talks about and accepts missionaries as real people. Yes ( ) No ( )
13. We read and encourage our children to read at least one missionary biography each year. Yes ( ) No ( )
14. We have spent a family vacation visiting and assisting missionaries in another culture. Yes ( ) No ( )
15. We invite people of other cultures (Christian and/or non-Christian) to our home from time to time. Yes ( ) No ( )

To score: The point value for each "yes" answer is 7 points, totaling 105 points.

A score of 70 or more means mission-minded children are developing.

A score of 50-70 means above average family involvement in missions.

A score below 50 means definite improvement is needed to produce the next generation of mission-minded people.

Mission Prayer Partnership

OCTOBER

19 **Pray** for our retired *missionaries* that they might know they are still appreciated by all.

20 **Pray** for Director of Publishing, *Bob Mayer*, that the Lord would give him wisdom as he develops new publications for our people.

21 **Pray** for the pastors in *Nigeria* that God would strengthen them in their labors for Christ.

22 **Pray** for our national missionaries in *Mexico* that God would give them decisions for Christ.

23 **Pray** for our Mexican supervisor, *Abel Garcia-Lara* that the Lord would continue to strengthen him physically.

24 **Pray** that the Lord would bless the *radio ministry* of our denomination that many persons might find their faith strengthened.

25 **Praise** the Lord for renewed interest in missions by many of our *young people* and that the Lord would continue to raise up mission prospects.

26 **Pray** for *Dave Vignali* as he flies back to the Philippines.

27 **Pray** for our *Regional Superintendents* and the great burdens for the churches, pastors and churches they carry.

28 **Pray** for the *Eastern Regional Association* meetings this week.

29 **Pray** for the meetings of the *Japanese* and *Philippine* National Advent Christian Conferences next month.

30 **Pray** for *Caroline Michael*, Director of Women's Ministries, for a special blessing on this her birthday.

31 **Praise** the Lord for the *staff* at Advent Christian Headquarters as they faithfully work for us and their Lord.

NOVEMBER

1 **Praise** the Lord for another record-breaking *Penny Crusade*.

Prayer Partnership

2 Pray for *Margaret Helms* as she conducts Leadership Training clinics in the greater Cebu area.
3 Pray for *Alice Brown* that the Lord would give her strength and wisdom as she directs Oro Bible College.
4 Pray for *Frank and Judy Jewett* as they continue their deputation work in New England.
5 Pray for *Bruce Arnold* as he conducts English Bible classes in the greater Cebu area.
6 Pray for *Thambusamy and Victoria Devairakkam* and their family as they minister in the Kluang area.
7 Pray for *Lucas and Beulah Devasahayam* and their family as they reach out in the Banting area and estates.
8 Pray that the men and women God wants will be *elected* to leadership in our nation, state and local governments today. Pray that Christians will get out and *vote*.
9 Pray for our pastors in *urban churches* that they might be strengthened and encouraged as they seek to reach their communities for Christ.
10 Pray for our Advent Christian brethren in *Canada* on this their Thanksgiving Day.
11 Pray for the *children* of our missionaries that God would sustain them and strengthen them in their studies.
12 Pray for *Austin and Dorothy Warriner*. Especially that God would grant them many decisions for Christ in Askano.
13 Pray for *Floyd and Musa Powers* as they work with the new mission church in Vozumi.
14 Pray for *Francis and Lynne Ssebikindu* that God would encourage them in their work in Memphis.
15 Pray for *Marion Damon* as she carries the great responsibility of our work in India.
16 Pray for *Barbara White* as she teaches a class of illiterate Indian women on how to present the Gospel.
17 Pray for *Beryl Joy Hollis* and the pastors that she works with in the Madras area.
18 Pray for the graduates and students of the *India School of Evangelism* that the great harvest there would continue.

South Africa's Future:Marxist or Democratic? **From pg. 3**

Richard Neuhaus sums up best the result of bad policy: "The Afrikaner government bears primary, although not exclusive responsibility, for...resolving the problem. There is relatively little that the U.S. government can do to affect the situation. Further efforts aimed at the economic isolation of South Africa would have the political effect of strenghtening reactionary forces in Afrikanerdom, and the economic effect of enhancing the already growing power of Japanese and European business in that country."

What we need from Christian churches and organizations is less adherence to fashionable but misguided, destructive ideas. More than anyone else, Christians inside and outside of South Africa must wrestle with constructive ways to replace apartheid with a democratic form of government that gives all South Africans political and economic freedom. □

God, Let's Talk **Cont. From page 10**

there were particles of iron in it, I might look for them with my clumsy fingers and be unable to detect them; but let me take a magnet and sweep through it and now it would draw the almost invisible particles by the mere power of attraction. The unthankful heart, like my finger in the sand, discovers no mercies: but let the thankful heart sweep through the day and as the magnet finds the iron, so it will find, in every hour, some heavenly blessings, only the iron in God's sand is gold!"

Respect. Selflessness. Full of grace. Dependent. Confident of God's integrity. Such attitudes epitomize great prayer. One may pray in a business suit or blue jeans and flannel shirt; a cathedral or a simple, wood frame structure; in King James English or with the bluntness of a new believer; loudly or silently. The style with which we clothe our prayers impresses others. The attitude out of which our prayers grow impresses God. □

Last Temptation: Why All the Fuss? **Cont. from page 23**

stand and challenge the world with the claims of Jesus Christ. It's not wrong to challenge the misrepresentation of Christ. As a matter of fact, it is a must. People cannot know who He is if we do not present Him to the world.

As was the case with Paul in Athens, when we present the good news of the gospel and the resurrection of Jesus from the dead, some will sneer, others will want to hear more, and a few will believe. □

A graduate of Berkshire Christian College, Steve Spearing is pastor of the Smithfield Advent Christian Church.

Last Temptation: Why All the Fuss?

Steve Spearing

I began to do some research on the movie, *"The Last Temptation of Christ."* In the process of my reading, listening to news reports, and conversing with the people some questions emerged in my own mind.

As Christians should we keep silent so as not to draw attention to the film, insuring the Hollywood film industry success at the box office? Has it come to the place where the billboard reads, "Dollars & Cents verses Truth?" who cares if, in defending the truth of Christ, Hollywood makes millions? They will still stand before Christ on the day of judgment.

In Acts 7 you will read of the stoning of the apostle Stephen. He was stoned because he confronted the Jewish establishment for their treatment of Jesus as well as their religious practices and behavior. Stephen could have easily shook his head and gone to the next community to find a more receptive crowd.

Consider the Apostle Paul, in Acts 17, on his visit to Athens. He was greatly troubled to see that the city was full of idols, and could not keep silent. He began to reason in the synagogue with the Jews and the God-fearing Greeks; in the marketplace with whoever happened to be there; and with other philosophical groups.

The Epicureans and Stoics began to dispute him. Paul was brought to a meeting of the Areopagus. Why? They wanted to hear about his new teaching he was spreading. What was this teaching? Acts 17:18: "Paul was preaching the good news about Jesus and the resurrection."

Paul could have looked at Athens with all their religious practices, shook his head and moved on. When he presented Christ, some sneered, others wanted to hear more, and a few believed.

The movie *"The Last Temptation of Christ"* is more than a personal interpretation of the humanity of Christ. You are also dealing with the lack of historical evidence in the portrayal and with improper scriptural interpretation of the life of Christ. One only has to read the Gospels to see that Jesus knew exactly why He came and what His missions was. The Bible does tell us that He was tempted in all ways just as we are; except he did not sin (Hebrews 4:15), a quality, impossible for us to comprehend.

It's not wrong for Christians to

Continued on page 22

DISCOVER YOUR POSSIBILITIES

Find out how you can use your work skills and experience to serve God.

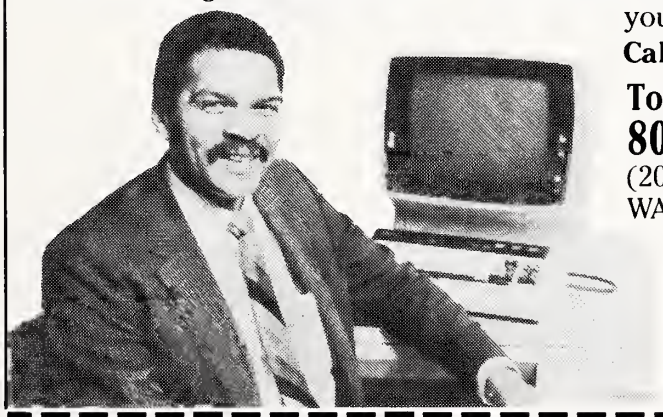
Right now thousands of Christian organizations offer fulfilling job opportunities in a wide range of occupations – in the U.S. and overseas.

Call the Christian Placement Network and discover your possibilities.

Call today!

Toll free
800-426-1342
(206-546-7330 in WA, HI and Canada)

Or return the coupon below.



Mail this coupon to

Intercristo

Intercristo
The Career and Human Resource Specialists
19303 Fremont Avenue North
Seattle, Washington 98133

☐ Yes! Please send me free information on Intercristo's Christian Placement Network.

Name _____
Address _____
City/State/Zip _____
Publication _____ a Division of CRISTA

Your Servants for Christ's Cause

International Missionaries

Philippines

Alice Brown (March 24)
P.O. Box 223
9000 Cagayan de Oro
PHILIPPINES

Margaret Helms (September 18)
P.O. Box 263
6000 Cebu City
PHILIPPINES

Frank and Judy Jewett
(December 11 and January 29)
Danny Jewett (June 13, 1976)
Timmy Jewett (June 26, 1978)
Letitia Jewett (April 13, 1980)
34 Main Street
Eliot, ME 03903

David Vignali (May 10)
P.O. Box 223
9000 Cagayan de Oro
PHILIPPINES

Bruce Arnold (June 21)
P.O. Box 263
6000 Cebu City
PHILIPPINES

Japan

Floyd and Musa Powers
(October 8 and February 28)
Rebecca Powers (Nov. 11, 1971)
4-11-18 Motoyama Kitamachi
Higashinada ku, Kobe shi 658
JAPAN

Austin and Dorothy Warriner
(January 1 and January 18)
3-37 Okayama Higashi
5 Chome, Shijonawate Shi
Osaka Fu 575
JAPAN

India

Marion Damon (March 27)
Box 17, Andivilla
Kodaikanal 624101
INDIA

Beryl Joy Hollis (December 16)
American Advent Mission
Velacheri, Madras 600 042
INDIA

Barbara White (January 14)
Box 17, Andivilla
Kodaikanal 624101
INDIA

National Missionaries

Malaysia

mbusamy and
oria Devairakkam
Jalan Sayang Housing Trust
0 Kluang, Johor
T MALAYSIA

s and Beulah Devasahayam
alan Cempaka
an Gembira
0 Banting, Selangor
LAYSIA

Memphis

Francis and Lyne Ssebikindu
(May 13 and May 8)
Faith Nancy (September 28, 1982)
Ashley Grace (November 21, 1985)
2590 Faxon Avenue
Memphis, TN 38112

Mexico

Abel Garcia-Lara
368 Anita Street, Sp. 62
Chula Vista, CA 92011

Alberto Gomez
Arturo Angulo
Ever Perez
Ezequiel Serrato
c/o Abel Garcia-Lara

Nigeria

E.P. Etuk-Akpan — Secretary
Nigerian Advent Christian Mission
Ediene Ikot Obio Imo Headquarters
c/o Use Ikot Ebio P.A. Offot
Uyo Local Government Area
Akwa Ibom State
NIGERIA

Advent Christian General Conference
P.O. Box 23152
Charlotte, NC 28212

old Patterson; World Missions
ie Griswold; Christian Education
oline Michael; Women's Ministries

Robert W. Cole; Finance
Robert Mayer; Publications
David Northup; Executive Vice-president

Brent Carpenter; Church Relations

ACO4848
University of North Carolina
Serials Dept. Davis Library
080 A
Chapel Hill, NC 27514

C286.7/A24

Advent Christian WITNESS

November 1988

Young People Build Philippine Church

page twelve

FEATURES

Five Things to Forget 4

To live an effective Christian life, G. Roger Schoenhals challenges us to forget five hinderances that stymie our faith.

"Kid's In Need" Makes a Difference in Young Lives 8

Kory Combs was challenged by a short term mission trip to Mexico to put his faith into action. Mark Collins shows us how Kory did just that.

Philippine Mission Focuses on Training and Planting 10

Advent Christian missionary Alice Brown describes, in this interview, the work of Advent Christian missions in the Philippines and discusses her call to missions service.

Young People Construct New Church Building 12

In this photo essay, Advent Christian missionary David Vignali captures the work of Filipino Advent Christian young people in building a new facility for the Patrocenio Advent Christian Church.

DEPARTMENTS

From the Editor	3
Review	15
Mailbox	17
Women's Ministries	18
Prayer Partnership	21
Family Builder	23

ON THE COVER:

What causes a group of Filipino young people to give a week of their vacation time to build a church? Their commitment to Jesus Christ. See the result of their work on page 12.

photo by David Vignali

Volume 36 Number 10

Advent Christian WITNESS

Editor Robert Mayer

Contributing Editors Caroline Michael, Harold Patterson, William Batson, Clayton Blackstone, David McCarthy

Typesetting Susan Gettis Proofreading Shirley Brooks

Art Director Linda Perault

The Advent Christian Witness (ISSN #007-740) is published monthly except for a combined July-August issue by the Advent Christian General Conference of America, 14601 Albemarle Road, P.O. Box 23152, Charlotte, N.C. 28212. Subscription rates in the United States and Canada: One year, $11.00. Single copy: $1.00. Overseas rate: One year, $14.00. Second class postage paid at Charlotte, N.C. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Advent Christian Witness, P.O. Box 23152, Charlotte, N.C. 28212.

As the official publication of the Advent Christian General Conference, the Advent Christian Witness publishes the teachings of the Advent Christian Church and promotes the task of evangelism both in North America and around the world. The views expressed in this magazine are those of the author and may not necessarily reflect those of the editor or the Advent Christian General Conference. Member: Evangelical Press Association.

Copyright © 1988 by the Advent Christian General Conference of America, Inc.

FROM THE EDITOR

Advent Christians Forge New Relationship With Evangelicals

Last year, the Advent Christian General Conference took a significant step by joining the National Association of Evangelicals. Throughout NAE's forty-five year history, Advent Christians have played important roles in the association and a number of Advent Christian congregations and organizations, including the Eastern Regional Association, held membership in NAE. But the General Conference joining represents the first time in the history of the Advent Christian Church that we've chosen to formally identify with a larger Christian association not identified with a specific task or ministry. (The Advent Christian General Conference holds membership in two specialty organizations: The American Bible Society and the Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability.)

Joining NAE is good for several reasons. First, Advent Christians have the opportunity to articulate their distinctive beliefs to other Christians who take the Bible and its message seriously. Many evangelical Christians today are troubled by the question of how a loving God could condemn people to endless torture in a burning hell. Advent Christian doctrinal distinctives like conditional immortality speak directly to that question and are being taken seriously by a number of evangelical leaders. While conditionalists are still a minority among the church at large, there's an openness to conditionalism that wasn't there 20 years ago.

Joining NAE also gives Advent Christians the opportunity to work with other Christians without having to compromise our doctrinal and prophetic heritage. NAE is a congregational association that encourages each member church and denomination to maintain and strengthen its doctrinal heritage. At the same time, Advent Christians share with NAE a commitment to these central tenets of the Christian faith: the Lordship of Jesus Christ, the inspiration of Holy Scripture, the soon return of Jesus Christ, and the need to evangelize our communities and our world.

And membership in NAE gives Advent Christians the opportunity to practice our Lord's command to demonstrate love for each other in the Body of Christ. Jesus was clear when he said people will know his disciples by the love they show for one another (John 13:35). In a world where people see Christians divided and fighting over minor issues, we need to practice with each other the love and forgiveness demonstrated to us by Jesus Christ.

That doesn't mean we agree on every point of doctrine with those we associate with. God makes each of us unique. Like Paul and Barnabas in the New Testament, we're going to disagree at times. But providing we share a common commitment to the Lordship of Jesus Christ, the authority of Holy Scripture, and the need for salvation, we can work together.

Does joining NAE solve all of our problems? Obviously not. As the 20th century draws to a close, the Advent Christian Church faces crucial issues. How do we effectively train future pastors, missionaries, and church leaders? Can we increase our church planting in cities and suburbs all across the United States and Canada? Can we maintain doctrinal distinctives that are

Continued on page 22

5 Things to FORGET

G. Roger Schoenhals

Some things are hard to forget. We try, but the more we try, the more we remember. It seems to be a rule: we forget things we want to remember and remember things we want to forget.

Still, there are things we *need* to forget. Certain memories keep us from going forward. They block progress. They inhibit growth.

The apostle Paul, while recognizing that some things are good to remember, (Philippians 1:6) sought to rid his mind of certain memories that impeded his spiritual progress. He said, "Forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal..." (Philippians 3:14).

What are some of these things we do well to forget? While not exhaustive, here's a list of five. Are any of these slowing you down?

Forget your failures

After Peter repented and found forgiveness for denying the Lord, did he ever relive the occasion? I imagine that the memory of his colossal failure encountered him more than once.

And what about Paul and his persecution of the early church? I can see him cringing as he recalls his ruthless behavior.

And what of David who committed adultery, murder, and deceit? Surely there were times when he, too, agonized over these memories.

Perhaps you are plagued by a memory that causes you to toss and turn in the night. Maybe you let someone down; someone who trusted you. Maybe you are guilty of unfaithfulness and deceit. Maybe you recall striking or mistreating someone you love.

Maybe you are dogged by a series of failures. You recall repeated times when the same temptation brought you down. You wince at the multitude of these malignant memories.

Even though you have sought and received forgiveness for a failure, you can't seem to get it out of your mind. Sometimes it sweeps over you with tempest force. You try to block it out, but the reality of your failure lashes your mind.

The memory of failure is like acid. It eats away at a positive self-image. It burns and scars attitudes of hope and happiness. It ignites a failure complex and fuels the expectation of defeat.

There is one thing we should do with failure after we have faced it and flung it upon the Lord: Forget it!

Forget your hurts

When I was a young teen, several "friends" ganged up on me and cut my hair. They added insult to injury by anointing my head with glue. It was a mean prank, and it hurt me deeply.

For several years I carried the hurt around. I felt badly toward the person who had masterminded the deed. It was hard to let the hurt go.

Down inside every one of us is sensitive to personal abuse. Maybe someone has slandered your name. Perhaps you have been the butt of a joke or the object of ridicule. Perhaps your parents mistreated you and you bear deep emotional scars. Or

maybe your spouse jilted or harmed you.

We can fondle our hurts for years. The unfair discipline of a grade school teacher can linger and lame our lives. The broken promise of a father can fester indefinitely as an open sore. The betrayal of a lover can put us into a psychological wheelchair.

Hanging on to our hurts can sap us of energy, rob us of joy, and keep us from moving forward. Our hurts can hamper our growth. The only healing antidote is to hurl our hurts upon the Great Burden-bearer; and then to forget them once and for all.

Forget past pleasures

Lot's wife looked back. Even though she had been warned to forget the past, she turned and looked wistfully at smoldering Sodom (Genesis 19:15-26).

Jesus said, "No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God" (Luke 9:62).

When we commit (and recommit) ourselves to follow Christ, our memories often fail to come faithfully along. Some pleasures continue to stroke our attention and call us backward. These wrongful pleasures appeal to the carnal nature within. Pleasures enjoyed at the expense of conscience. Pleasures that feed self-indulgence and hedonistic desire.

Perhaps we are haunted by former memories of luxury and plush carpet comfort. In our weak moments, we look back at what we cast off when we took up our cross to follow Christ. Or maybe we are tantalized by the memory of pleasurable, but illegitimate involvements. Or perhaps we wistfully recall the unreined pleasures of our youth.

Any self-absorbing memory that slows us down, that pulls us back, that keeps us from forward focus can spell disaster. Consider the pillar of salt on the trail out of Sodom.

The best place for remembered pleasures is at the bottom of the Great Sea of Forgetfulness. Pitch them in!

Forget your achievements

In the third chapter of his letter to the Philippians, the Apostle Paul catalogued his credits. In a several verse "vita sheet" he defined his pedigree. He even compared himself with other spiritual athletes and declared, "I have more" (Philippians 3:4-6).

People who surround the walls of their minds with plaques and plaudits of the past tend to dwell in the past. They relish their contributions, their performances, their achievements, their exploits, their conquests, and their successes. They think more highly of themselves than they ought to think. They dwell in the shrine of self-importance and live out the remainder of their lives straining to recapture yesterday's happiness.

I once interviewed a pastor in his study. I was there to learn about his church. What did he tell me? He said nothing about the program and plans of the church. Instead, he showed me the trophy case on the wall and extolled the successes of last year's softball team. He was dwelling in the past.

Paul listed his achievements only to contrast their empty value to the worth of knowing Christ. He said, "Whatever gain I had, I counted as loss for the sake of Christ" (Philippians 3:7).

The best way to handle the achievements of the past is to let loose of them. Someone once said, "When I receive a bouquet of applause I take a quick sniff and hand it up to the Lord for his glory."

Instead of filling a mental display case with the glories of yesterday, take the trophies and toss them to the wind.

Forget your kindnesses

Some people like to publish their good works. They relish the applause of men. They want to be remembered for what they said or did. They play over in their minds, like a broken record, any little deed of kindness.

Contrast this to those whom Jesus said would be surprised when they were told that they had fed the hungry, welcomed the stranger, clothed the naked, visited the sick and imprisoned. These "sheep" had forgotten their kindnesses.

The "goats" were different. They lived at the microphone, announcing to the world their latest deed. They loved the kudos and backslaps. They said, "We did this and this and this." But Jesus said, "Depart from me..." (Matthew 25:41).

The best thing to do after

performing a deed of kindness is to cast it's memory upon the Lord. Give it to Him.

Something to remember

Peter exhorts us to "Cast all your anxieties on him, for he cares about you" (1 Peter 5:22). We might paraphrase this to read, "Cast your debilitating memories upon the Lord..."

But flinging these thoughts on Him is only part of the answer. The memory bank needs new deposits to replace the old. Indeed, we will have more success expunging harmful memories if we will remember three things about God.

First, remember that God loves. Play this over and over in your mind. Let its truth seep deep into your subconscious. Remember that you are special in God's eyes and that He desires your wholeness. Remember that He wants you to live a full and abundant life through active faith in Christ.

Second, remember that God forgives. He does not deal with us according to our failures, but according to His mercy (Psalm 103:10). He not only forgives, He forgets! He said, "I will remember their sins no more" (Hebrews 8:12).

Isaiah tells us that God takes our

Continued on page 22

Roger Schoenhals is past editor of Light and Life, *and is now a freelance writer living in Seattle, Washington.*

The Great Exchange

George Bayrouty

I write this on June 21st, 1988. It will be 17 years this July that I have been a Christian. Throughout these many years, the one thing that I've desired is that I might please the Lord. The Lord has done such great things in my life, but the most amazing discovery that I have found in my desire to please the Lord and do His will, is that, in myself, *I* can't do it. Day after day, month after month, year after year, *I* have done everything in my power to serve the Lord. I've tried but failed, I've prayed but failed, I've fasted but failed, I've done everything to keep His commandments, but still failed.

"Lord! What's the problem?" I cried. Then, when I finally stopped my kicking and crying, I screamed, "O, wretched man that I am, who will deliver me from the body of this death?" That's when the Lord started His work. The Lord showed me who He was and who I was. I, in myself, was nothing. I could not please God. Even the best of my righteousness was as filthy rags before Him (Isaiah 64:6). He showed me that the only way to have His life was to receive it, which I did when I received Christ as my Saviour. He showed me the only way I could continue to experience His life was to abide in Him.

Apart from the Lord, *I* could do nothing. This meant I could not please Him; I could not serve Him; I could not be His light, and I could not bear His fruit. I began to realize that *I* was the whole problem. Then, the Lord opened my eyes to see what Jesus Christ did about the "*I*" problem. The Lord showed me, throughout the Scriptures, that man in himself (*I*) could not keep His commandments. His just requirements could only be kept by Himself, *Jesus the Christ*. When Jesus went to the cross, He fulfilled the Law and satisfied God's just requirements. Then He took not only our sins upon Himself, but He became that very sin so that through Him you and I might become the righteousness of God (2 Corinthians 5:21). In other words, the "*I*" was crucified with Christ (Romans 6:6) so that we would be set free from or the *sin nature*.

However, the good news is that, not only have we been set free from our sin nature, but through Christ's resurrection we received His very life, the only life that could please God...the only life that could serve God...the only life that could keep His commandments, do His will, bear His fruit, and be His light.

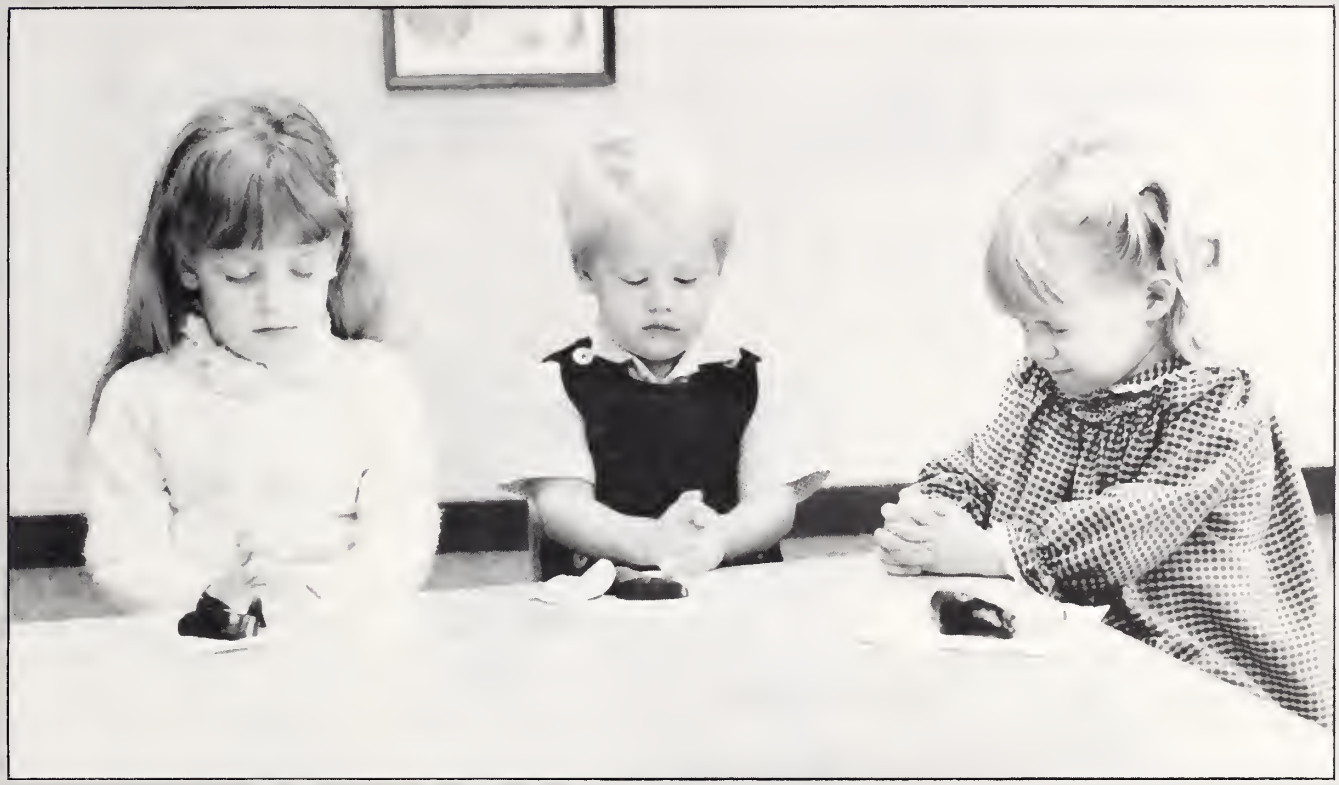
Paul beautifully describes this in Galatians 2:20-21: "I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. I do not set aside the grace of God, for if righteousness could be gained through the law, Christ died for nothing."

Paul tells us that the "*I*" is dead; our life is hid with Christ in God; and

Continued on page 22

George Bayrouty serves the Lord through business and Prison ministry. He attends Oak Hill Bible Advent Christian Church in Oxford, Massachusetts.

Biblical values have always been taught here.



Every Sunday, week in, week out, teachers rely on *Bible-in-Life* Sunday school materials to help them clearly show their students the difference between right and wrong, between respecting the rights of others and living entirely for oneself, between honoring God's laws and ignoring them. *Bible-in-Life* literature helps teachers stress those timeless, changeless values that help build a God-fearing nation, and will help build the character of young people for generations to come.

Bible-in-Life materials can help you teach the Biblical value of faith . . . the value of honesty . . . the value of obedience . . . thankfulness . . . purity . . . love . . . . Life Curriculum can help you tell the value of knowing that Jesus Christ is the Lord of life. There is no more important value. To those of you who share the same mission and have chosen Advent Christian materials to help you accomplish it, we say thank you. To others, we invite you to join us in our quest. Send for your free *Bible-in-Life* samples today!

Bible-in-Life *Sunday school materials are produced by the David C. Cook Publishing Co. who have helped teach Biblical values for over 110 years.*

Free Sunday School Curriculum Samples. Check any or all departments below.

☐ Nursery ☐ Kindergarten ☐ Primary (1-2) ☐ Primary-Junior (3-4)
☐ Junior (5-6) ☐ Junior High ☐ Senior High ☐ Adult

Name _____ Position _____
Church _____
☐ Church
☐ Home Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
☐ Church
☐ Home Phone No. _____ / _____

Send to: Dept. of Christian Education, P.O. Box 23152, Charlotte, NC 28212

"Kids in Need:"

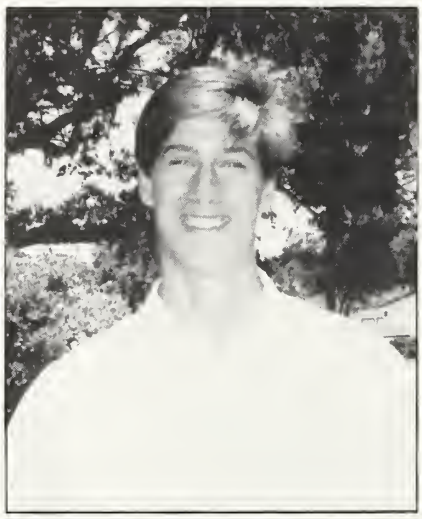
Making a Difference in Young Lives

Mark A. Collins

It was only a line on a map. There was no scar in the earth that had summoned it into being. There was no mountain range, no desert, no river that called for its existence. Indeed, the line of the Mexican border was an invisible one, existing only in the minds of men. But the line made a difference.

Kory Combs felt the difference as he crossed that line into Mexico. North of the border, wide, well-paved streets were lined with modest, yet adequate houses and apartments. Water was clean and easy to come by. Food was plentiful, and cars were new.

South of the border, though, the picture changed. Good roads gave way to potholes. Green lawns were replaced by glass strewn patches of dry, knotted weeds. Tract houses, so much a part of Southern California, abruptly disappeared, and rows upon rows of plywood shanties sprang up to replace them. The casual daily struggles of middle class America evaporated in the hot Mexican sun, as the people of this poor land struggled to survive.



Kory Combs

To learn, and to help

Kory, a senior at Foothill High School in Santa Ana, California, and a member of the First Advent Christian Church in Tustin, had come to Mexico to learn — and to help. He had joined young people from North Park Community Church in San Diego on a one week missionary trip designed to introduce the young people to the harsh realities of life south of the border.

As vans that carried the high school students moved further and further away from Tijuana, conditions worsened. Local officials had worked hard to make the popular border city attractive to American tourists. Tourists meant money for the troubled economy. And money meant jobs.

But the tourist zones were only isolated islands of marginal prosperity in this heavily indebted land. Away from the eyes of bargain hunters and weekend adventurers, the depth of human need was exposed.

Yet not everything in Mexico spoke of hopelessness and despair. To his dismay, Kory found himself overwhelmed with hospitality and generosity. People with virtually nothing in the way of material possessions served as gracious hosts. Though there might be little for dinner, a guest would always be welcomed to take his or her place at the table. It was ironic, he thought,

that such hospitality was so much harder to find north of the border.

The days were full ones, and passed quickly. There was a trip to the Mexican coast, where children who lived less than 15 miles from the ocean were introduced to it for the first time. There were visits to orphanages where rows of infants lie crying in cribs, with no one to comfort them. There was Marcos, the young boy that Kory had befriended. Finally, there was the journey home.

For the least of these

After the trip back to San Diego, Kory boarded the train that would take him back to Orange County. The trip home offered him time to think about what he had seen. He remembered what Jesus had said to his disciples. "Whatever you did for one of the least of these...," he remembered, "you did it for me." He had to do something. He had to do something for the children.

He did. Shortly after school began in the fall, a club information day was scheduled for new and returning students. Kory set up a information table for a new club he called "Kids in Need." He talked to his fellow students about what he had in mind, and took names of interested people. At the end of the day, Kory was surprised to find that his new organization already had a membership of 70 students.

At first, Kory had intended for the group to focus on ways to help children in Mexico. But soon, it became apparent that there was no shortage of opportunities to help young people. "Kids in Need" and its surprisingly active membership, under the direction of Kory and another student, sponsored a special Halloween Carnival for diabetic children before the organization was two months old. About 250 diabetic children were able to attend, and over 45 high school students worked to staff booths and games designed to make the event a memorable one.

An evening lecture series for high school students was initiated by "Kids in Need," beginning with a presentation on child abuse. Over 75 young people attended, taking two hours to ask questions and get information. More lectures, covering subjects such as parenting, leukemia, and AIDS, are planned.

"Kids in Need" also sponsored a Valentine's Day party for the Sheepfold, a ministry serving battered, abused wives and their children. A fair for asthmatic children is being planned and, of course, efforts are being made to help support the work of "Los Ninos," the organization that sponsored Kory's summer trip to Mexico.

Kory is reluctant to talk about his involvement in "Kids in Need." He credits another student for much of the work of the organization. "She's so organized," he says. "It's scary!"

The youngest of nine children, Kory struggles with the new responsibilities he faces as an adult. Applications to several different universities have long since been mailed, and he anxiously prepares to make decisions that will affect the course of his life.

He's grateful for his faith. He's thankful for the leading that God provides for him. He doesn't know where he'd be without it.

And what of his service for the children in need? He smiles. It's the least he can do. □

Mark Collins is a student at Fuller Theological Seminary and attends First Advent Christian Church in Tustin, California.

An interview with Alice Brown

Philippine Mission Focuses on Leadership Training and Church Planting

Alice Brown, Advent Christian missionary serving in the Philippines, serves as a teacher and administrator at ORO Bible College. During her recent furlough, the *Advent Christian Witness* asked her to reflect on her two terms of service in the Philippines.

Alice, when did you first become interested in serving as a missionary?

When I came to know the Lord at age five, I told my mom I was going to be a missionary nurse. I remembered the nursing part, but I forgot the missionary part until I got older. When I attended nursing school, I was active in a mission minded church. As I was graduating from nursing school many people, knowing my commitment to serve the Lord, started to ask, "Are you going to be a missionary nurse?" I said, "I'm not sure, maybe."

I was planning to enroll at Berkshire Christian College and I was open to missions because of the strong mission-minded church that I attended and because of my past exposure to missions with my aunt being a missionary. When I got to Berkshire, I immediately became involved in the student mission fellowship. Being a transfer student, some of my nursing credits transferred so I had to declare a major quicker than other students. I didn't know what major I wanted to declare. When I looked at all the programs, the program that I fit into was the mission program. That was like the Lord saying, "Ah, ha! this is the area." Later, when I attended the 1973 InterVarsity Student Missions Conference in Urbana, Illinois, God confirmed my call to missions. Without any question, it was God's will for me to be in missions. Since that time, there has never been any question or doubt and I praise the Lord for His calling me into missions.

You've served two terms as a missionary in the Philippines. What have been the highlights of your service there?

The highlights of my first term were getting to know the people, learning the language, understanding the culture, developing relationships, and learning about our mission work in the Philippines. In my second year after language study, I started teaching at Oro Bible College. I was also involved in several evangelistic Bible studies.

Now in my second term, since I know the people, the language, and the culture better I feel I've been able to minister much more effectively. Most of my time is centered with the college, teaching and doing administrative work. For the first three years of my second term, I led three teams of students assigned to do church planting. This past year I have been a member of a team which has traveled to churches doing seminars on praise and worship, the abundant Christian life, healing and deliverance. I have grown much in my own relationship with the Lord during the past two years.

What have been some of the things that you've sensed God teaching you especially during your last term in the Philippines?

I have been a Christian most of my life with a good, solid Bible background. I've grown and matured in the Lord and yet there are so many struggles in my life. I was struggling with developing my consistent quiet time with the Lord in the area of prayer—and I sensed there was still something lacking.

One Sunday I left church and I said, "I'm sorry God, but I didn't worship you today. There was nothing in the worship service that led me to worship you—the songs, the prayers, the message, nothing." I felt dry spiritually.

I began praying, "Lord, there's got to be more, show me." I felt that we didn't know how to worship the Lord and in the prayer meetings we attended, we weren't really touching the depths of prayer. "What's missing, Lord?" I prayed.

Two years ago a new chaplain and teacher came to the school and I shared with him, "this is my burden. We need to teach our students how to praise and worship the Lord and we need real Christian discipleship among them. We're in a rut in our college, and in our churches. It's a cycle and we have got to get out of that rut. Even my own life was part of that rut." When I shared this with him, he said, "That's exactly what God has put on my heart." So for the past two years at Oro Bible College we have gone through the basics of what it means to worship. We have emphasized biblical principles of worship and we have put them into practice. We have studied the biblical principles of prayer and intercession, and we have put them into practice. We have looked at what the Scripture teaches about spiritual warfare, and we have put it into practice.

As a result not only have I grown personally, but our students have grown spiritually. Our teachers have grown in the Lord, and I see the Lord working in our churches as well. During these past two years we have been primarily growing in the Lord in the area of praise and worship, prayer and intercession and spiritual warfare.

You've talked some about Oro Bible College and its relationship to the ministry of churches in the Philippines conference. Could you tell us about Oro Bible College, what your responsibilities are with the school, and what the school is trying to do in relationship to equipping students.

I started at the college as a faculty member, and I am now the director of the college. I also serve as academic dean and I teach two or three courses each semester.

Our college is trying to develop the total person. We try to develop students academically so that they have the knowledge that they need to minister effectively. We train them spiritually, providing daily chapels, retreats, counseling, and discipleship ministry so that our students grow in their relationship with the Lord. We try to develop them socially as people through our student life program, providing seminars, activities, and ministries that will help them develop the total person. We try to develop our students' ministry skills. We don't preach or teach in the classroom. We give them opportunities to practice and every weekend to use what they have learned, whether it's teaching, leading a Bible study, doing evangelism or preaching. Our students learn skills needed for the ministry in classroom, which includes a practicum and then they go out and do it. Every weekend our students are out in our churches preaching, teaching, doing evangelism, leading Bible studies and various other ministries. We're trying to develop the whole person academically, spiritually, socially and in the area of ministry skills.

OBC offers a two-year certificate, a three-year diploma and a five-year degree (B.Th.). Currently (June '88) we have thirty students, two of whom are doing their internship.

What priorities do you see for the Philippine Advent Christian mission in the coming five to ten years?

Two priorities stand out: Leadership training and church planting. We need many more trained leaders. The goal of our Conference "Mission 2000" is to have 180 churches by the year 2000. To have 180 churches we need a minimum of 200 trained workers and as we train workers through the Bible College that doesn't mean just 200 students. Why? Not everyone is going to graduate and hopefully many of our students will find their life's partner at OBC so two graduates become one pastoral team. We need to develop leaders and train more than 200 in the Bible College both through the residence and extension programs and through lay training in our churches. This is an area of need and concern, an area where we as a mission are committed to continuing developing leadership in the church through training.

Church planting is also important. The Philippines is open to the gospel. If we had time, we could probably teach a Bible study every day of the week. The people want to hear the gospel and in times of crisis people are very open. In the area of church planting, we don't have enough trained people to go out into the areas that are open to

Continued on page 14

YOUNG PEOPLE CONSTRUCT NEW CHURCH BUILDING

In the mountains near Clavaria lies the Patrocenio Advent Christian Church. This 100 member congregation will celebrate its 20th anniversary next year. The building pictured above seated only 40-50 people.

Part of the Teen Missions Outreach (TMO) team which went to Patrocenio to help build a new facility for the congregation. TMO is an arm of Teen Missions International based in Merritt Island, Florida. TMO uses Filipino young people, several from Advent Christian churches in the Philippines, for a variety of missions projects.

The team constructs the new church building. The new facility will have much more room for worship and other church activities.

The frame and the roof for the new building are complete. The TMO team's work is done as church members will finish constructing the walls and handle work on the interior. Even though the walls were not complete, the congregation has already begun using the building for worship and other activities.

photos by David Vignali

us. So we need more missionaries and nationals to be involved in church planting.

That leads me to my next question. If one of our readers is sensing God's call into mission service, what would you recommend that they do?

Seek God's will. God has a plan for each one of us, and if God wants you serving Him in a foreign land or a different culture, you're not going to be happy unless you are where God wants you to be. We have to realize that God's will is best. He doesn't want to give us second best, and we shouldn't settle for second best. If his best for you is mission service then that's where you should be.

Become informed. Get as much information about missions as you can. Read, talk to missionaries, attend mission conferences. Write to missionaries and learn as much as you can about missions. Be open to the Lord's leading. Talk to your pastor and other Christian leaders who know your gifts and your abilities. They can give you counsel whether they feel that you would be able to be involved in ministry. Write to the A.C.W.M. Department for specific information about Advent Christian mission work and needs.

Get the training you need. I recommend that everyone interested in missions either major in missions in Bible College or take a one or two year Master of Ministries degree in missions to get a good, solid foundation.

Earlier, you mentioned the Intervarsity Student Missions Conference held every three years in Urbana, Illinois. It sounds like that had a significant impact upon you. Would you recommend that being an event that most Christians should consider attending once in their life?

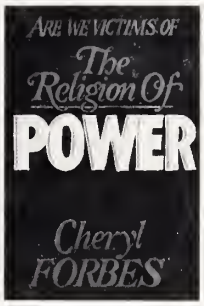
Urbana is very, very important. You are never the same after attending. Urbana opens your mind to the purpose and goal of missions. To be in a group of 17,000 to 20,000 students and adults and to be challenged by great missionary speakers, is a fantastic experience. I felt God was leading me into missions but Urbana solidified that commitment. From Urbana '73 I continued to grow in my relationship with the Lord and my commitment to missions, and I continued to learn more about missions. By the time I attended Urbana '76, my commitment to missions was strong. I went back as a Bible study leader and I was grappling with the deeper issues of missions. I remember Dr. Helen Rosenvier sharing her experience in the Congo and how when the Revolution came she was tortured and beaten. She challenged us with the word, "Would you be willing to be tortured for the Lord, would you be willing to be raped for the Lord?" I remember sitting there and thinking, "Lord that would be hard, but with you all things are possible." My second time at Urbana deepened my commitment.

I would recommend that anybody and everybody who has the opportunity to go to Urbana Missions Conference, go. God doesn't call all of us into missions, but He has commissioned all of us to share the Gospel with all people. He called some of us to go and some of us to fulfill that ministry here in our Jerusalems. But we all have a responsibility for missions wherever He may send us.

Like you said, not everyone is called to leave family and friends to go overseas or into an inner city and proclaim the gospel in those settings, and yet we are all called to be witnesses where we are and be supportive to those who do go. What are some of the ways that our readers can be supportive of missions, can be supportive of your efforts and the efforts of others to reach the Philippines, Japan, and other places with the gospel?

We have to understand Christ's commission to us to go into all the world and preach the gospel, and that He's given us the power of the Holy Spirit to be witnesses wherever we're called to serve. We are to be ministers sharing the gospel in our Jerusalems where we are. We are also to be involved in our Judeas and our Samarias and to the end of the world. That means all of us have responsibility in our communities to home missions and to world missions. We need to support our own local ministries, the ministries of our regional and national programs and the ministries of the world mission program. We need to do this through our time, our finances, and our prayer support. Prayer is the key. The battle cannot be won without prayer. We must pray for workers and for the finances to support those workers. I think prayer is the key. As we pray, that the Lord of the harvest will send forth His workers, He will challenge us to go, He will bring in finances and He will bring the peoples of the world into His Kingdom. □

Power? Just Say "No."



"Power is a god, and a heady intoxicating one; success is its creed. The promises of power are hard to resist, and few of us do."

In her book, **The Religion of Power** (Zondervan, 1983), Cheryl Forbes wastes few words as she launches her attack on one of the most insidious gods of our age. All share susceptibility to its allure. Believers in particular live in an uncomfortable tension, for "although the religion of power is the antithesis of Christianity, Christians participate in it."

Generally, followers of the Way enter the temple of Power innocently, believing that the foray will fulfill a God given task and advance His Kingdom. But, according to Forbes, the doors of the temple soon clang shut and one faces the inescapable truth: "Whoever attempts to wield power will find that power wields him."

The problem begins early in one's development. "We are raised to take charge of our futures and to believe that through effort and ability we gain intellectual and financial power." This god defines us, giving us "name and destiny."

Protestantism. Forbes contends, must accept a share of the blame for the rise of the god's influence. Since the days of Puritanism, we have accepted the notion that "the more faithful a person was, the more God would bless him materially, thus giving him wealth, position, and power."

The author speaks with prophetic directness. As the contemporary charismatic movement flirts with the exchange of its historic emphasis on the Holy Spirit for prosperity theology, the warning becomes flesh.

This work sounds a solemn alarm. "Do we, by calling power by other names, by euphemisms, conveniently deny our motivations? We want success," she suggests, "because it gives us power."

Power: A reality of life

Once the god of power lies exposed, stripped of its glamor, Forbes turns to the Scriptures. Life cannot be viewed when one's head rests in the sand. Power remains a reality of life. God, rather than secular thought, must shape our attitude towards it.

For instance, God has given us gifts. These gifts are intended to benefit His kingdom. The fact "that we are fulfilled in (doing what we are called to do) is a by-product, not a raison d'etre. Unfortunately, it is the experience itself that has become valid and valuable, rather than the furtherance of the kingdom. Whether we like what God has given us to do is not relevant; we should still do it...without commitment to the person for whom we work, a firm belief that he has called us to it, and a discipline to get the job done regardless of our feelings, we would accomplish little."

In dealing with biblical characters who struggled with the god of power, Forbes' understanding of Paul the Apostle's character debunks the myth of one larger than life. She suggests that he was "used to influence, accustomed to being obeyed." He mastered power, often using every weapon at hand to achieve victory. He "was a strange combination of humility and pride. When he believed that he was right, he fought to win; but he could also discreetly remove himself from the fray."

"The patriarchs, judges, priests, kings, prophets of the Old Testament and the apostles of the New, Paul included, were imperfect men who struggled against becoming children of the lesser god, power, to become the children of the greater God of Power."

Forbes turns finally to the accounts of creation in Genesis 1 and the Lord's Supper in the gospels to aid our understanding of the properties of power used rightly. Her conclusions bear careful consideration.

"There is no easier way to discern which power predominates than to look for the resurrection in a relationship, in a situation, in an organization. If you see people in transformation, you see his power. If you see lives resurrected and service given and received, you see true power. But when the body suffers from fractures, pain, infection, division, silence, hunger, or dissatisfaction, know that the power of the lesser god is near."

Saying "no" to power

In the end, the author leaves the reader confused, uncertain of what constitutes a uniquely Christian response. After a clear distinction between the right and wrong manifestations of power, she insists that "Christians must say no to power, individually and corporately. A decision for power is an-

tithetical to a desire for God."

Her jump in logic muddles the issue somewhat, yet the book deserves careful and thoughtful reading. Recent books such as Chuck Colson's *Kingdoms in Conflict* and Kent and Barbara Hughes' *Liberating Ministry from the Success Syndrome* fill the gap between principle and application missing in this work. In *The Religion of Power* the author calls our attention to neglected sin in the evangelical camp. Her style, confrontive at times, challenges our comfort zone.

We, in the end, must choose where we worship: at the feet of the power god or the God of Power. We must decide whether to continue to participate in power structures and struggles or to stop. We may opt to use power to advance causes through human means and reasoning or seek to become vessels through which the characteristics of God's power flow and chaos finds redemption.

Our response to these options determines the answer to a burning issue of this generation: What distinguishes the church from corporate America? Little or nothing *or* everything!

As I contemplated the issues addressed in this important work, the words of Elijah echoed and reechoed in my mind: "Choose this day whom you will serve. If God be God serve Him, but if power be god serve it."

—Clayton Blackstone

When People You Trust Let You Down

Kerri loved and trusted her husband but had to continually forgive him every time he betrayed her and promised her he'd change. Kerri's husband was an alcoholic who was quick tempered, abusive in public, and irresponsible with money decisions. After she left her husband, he later professed Christ as his savior and promised Kerri he had changed. After so much abuse and broken promises, she questioned if she was bound to go back with the man she no longer loved nor trusted.

Is there someone you've looked up to who has let you down? Perhaps it was a pastor or a Christian friend. Many Christians have supported television preachers with their tithe and sacrifical giving. Some even cried when the TV ministers cried. In recent months a number of those TV ministers have betrayed their audiences and misspent funds sent in for certain ministries.

When we experience deep hurt and pain from someone or some organization we trusted, it's easy to ask, "Why me?"

Do we also ask:

- If Christian leaders can give into temptation, what hope is there for me?
- How can we trust TV preachers?
- Are all TV preachers crooked?
- How can I trust that person who I thought was my friend?
- How can I attend church again, after the hurt I experienced there?
- If God is so loving, how could He have allowed this to happen to me?
- How can I trust anyone again?

Larry Richards author of, *When People You Trust Let Your Down,* (Word Books — 1987) shares with us how we can experience God's faithfulness. He shares the stories of Christians who have been betrayed by other people. He also reviews some of the stories of men and women recorded in the Bible and how God met them in the midst of their pain. Richards is able to show understanding of how others feel when hurt because he shares the hurts he's personally experienced. He encourages the reader to look at and deal with the hurt, without using the old cliche answer; 'forgive and forget.'

The author asks tough questions. But he doesn't stop there; he continues to help us answer those difficult questions. He then offers a list of guidelines to consider at the end of each chapter. In his final thought, at the end of each chapter, Richards asks thought provoking questions and challenges the reader in a few assignments for meditation or for group discussion. His book is written for group or for individual study. Richards gives the reader suggestions on how to deal with hurt, how we can continue living for the Lord, and how we can better serve Him so that our pain will not hinder our spiritual life and other relationships.

Larry Richards shares, "The hope that God will act to redeem not only our past, but our present and future as well. The hope that God will act to repair the damage and to make us whole." Christians everywhere can benefit from the authors wise, biblically based, counsel. □

—Renee Mayer

AIDS

Dear Editor,

I have read, with great interest, your article, "Aids: A Killer Disease", of the March 1988 issue of the *Advent Christian Witness.* As a registered nurse, working in an emergency room that sees over 28,000 people a year, I'm concerned with contemporary health issues.

I feel that the author, Mr. Ralph E. Dodge, has some gross misconceptions. When Mr. Dodge states (page 16) that health care providers should use "clean instruments," I became outraged. To my knowledge, there is no health care provider that would ever use a needle more than once, even on the same person. It was quite obvious that his resources included only the Surgeon General's Report. If the author would have researched the subject matter more in depth, I believe he would not have made such a shallow review of this disease.

I felt insulted as a health professional. I was angry that such ignorance is still perpetuated. I was hoping that the article would have given more insight on how to cope with this disease and its effects on us as Christians.

—Kenneth Winslow
Auburn, Wa.

The author responds:

I wish to thank you for the opportunity to reply to the letter from Kenneth Winslow and also to thank Mr. Winslow for his criticism. Undoubtedly my experiences in third and fourth world countries where equipment is limited and standards less rigid than in the United States came through in the phrase to which he objected. No insult was intended.

As most of your readers know, I am not a medical practitioner. When the article was originally written my purpose was to alert people, especially young people to the danger of AIDS. Hopefully Mr. Winslow's letter will help do that.

Since the manuscript was written much research has been done but to my knowledge no cure has yet been discovered. Perhaps Mr. Winslow could do the study involved and bring us up-to-date with the information he found lacking in my article. It would be a great service to all people.

—Ralph E. Dodge
Dowling Park, Fla.

Remembering a Devoted Pastor

Dear Editor:

Our hearts here at Elmore Church are saddened indeed over the passing of our dear brother in Christ, Bro. Pritchard, former pastor of our church.

Lingering on for a long time to come will be the cherished memory of his devoted service to our parish and precious precepts from God's Word that he so ably proclaimed.

Being superbly equipped by training and experience his homiletics were always a scholarly and persuasive presentation of biblical truths.

Having been a minister of the gospel and dedicated soldier of the cross of Jesus Christ for many years, we know that when the Master calls him from the tomb, he'll have many sheaves to lay at the Master's feet.

The Advent Christian Church has suffered the loss of a distinguished minister who will not be easily replaced.

—John P. Copenhaver
Elmore Memorial Advent
Christian Church
Charleston, W.V.

Church and State issues

Dear Editor,

I want to congratulate you on the editorial "Moral Majority: Ten Years Later" (July/August) it was well thought out and insightful. The process of government deals with people and hence is *political.* That is not a "bad" word. You can't work with people in any other way. Someone once said that, "Politics is the art of the possible," therefore it is the art of compromise, fairness, trade-offs, and at times selecting the lesser of two evils.

Christians, especially conservative ones, are not brought up to operate in this fashion. Therefore, when they enter the political arena as an organized group they come across as unfair, insensitive, and dictatorial. This perception turns people off. My reading of church history would say that if the founding fathers of our constitution had not provided for the "separation of church and state" we probably would not have a nation today. Is that too strong a statement? Perhaps, but I challenge you to look around the world of the last 220 years, Europe, Ireland, theMiddle East, India and tell me that I am wrong.

On another topic, I have read Dr. Hewitt's book *Midnight and Morning* four times since it first came off the press. The last two times, I made careful notes in preparation for a Sunday school and family camp class on "Adventism in the context of American history." Dr. Hewitt raises an important yet implicit question in that book, *"When one considers the size of the early Adventist groups why did the 7th day Adventists achieve so much while we did relative little?* I would like to see some articles in the *Witness* answering this question. We owe it to our members.

It struck me as I read the July/August issue of the *Witness* that perhaps part of the answer to item two might be found in the feature "Five Prophetic Thinkers and Their Messages." Perhaps too many of our best leaders have spent their most creative energy in establishing "time lines," "chronologies," and the historicism of biblical prophecy. Did this narrow focus overlook our own doctrine of the "whole person" and as a result we lost sight of people in this process?

—Barron Knechtel
San Diego, Calif.

Caroline Michael
Director

Oh, For the Love of Pete

Fern Smith

Childhood memories become more vivid with age...perhaps more time is given to remembering. My parents have been gone many years, but who they were, and their influence on my life continues.

I can see, through the eyes of memory, my mother in her cotton print dress, covered by a heavily starched apron. She always wore one except when she went out. Mother is sitting in the old oak rocker, embroidery in her hands, or standing at the small wooden ironing board ironing a basket of dampened, rolled clothing. I can hear her softly humming as she went about her housework. I also remember her many cliches, particularly her much used expression, "Oh, for the love of Pete!" meaning something unexpected, surprise, joy, or special happening. That phrase did not originate with my mother. I have wondered where it did begin.

Those words out of my past surfaced when my husband and I read H.S. Vigevano's *Thirteen Men Who Changed the World.* I especially like his sketch of Peter, the apostle. Speaking of Peter, Vigevano concludes the chapter with "His humility, his devotion, his shattered self-awareness, his experience of the Lord's forgiveness kept bringing him back *in love* to Jesus Christ." I felt a sort of burning desire for that Peter kind of love.

As I thought about Peter, I felt we had some things in common. It is easier for me to remember what I have done wrong in my life than what I have done right. I can imagine Peter's mind thinking that way when Jesus asked him three times, "Peter, do you love me?" Had his life spoken positively to that question? I think not!

I, with Peter have:

- sometimes followed Jesus from a distance,
- denied Him by my casual response to so great a salvation,

- rushed ahead in faith, relying on my own strength and having to call out, "Lord, save me,"
- questioned suffering and been reminded God's ways are above my ways,
- been slow to see what God is trying to teach me,
- been caught sleeping when God needed me,
- asked, "Lord, but what about that person?"
- learned slowly the spirit of servanthood, and
- acted impulsively, contrary to God's purpose.

Yes, Peter could have been thinking of these past experiences when His Lord posed the question, "Do you love me?" I would like to think that Jesus saw beyond the coward, the learner, the stumbler, the inquisitive one. He looked straight through to the *love* of Peter and asked Peter to be a shepherd to His sheep and to nurture them.

The two great commandments given by Jesus encompass the love principle: "*Love* the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: *Love* your neighbor as yourself" (Matthew 22:37-39, NIV).

When we respond to the good news of Jesus Christ, we confess with Peter "You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God." Following that confession, Jesus asks each of us a question, not doctrinal in nature, but simply "Do you love me?" Then the awesome realization that we, too, have been called according to His purpose which is to love His church into being.

In spite of life's blunders, the "love of Pete" can mean to us something unexpected, surprise, joy, a special happening. If Peter's kind of love is the basis for building the church of Jesus Christ, should we not all say with a sense of urgency and enthusiasm, "Oh, for the love of Pete."

Fern has served with her husband, pastor Jim Smith, now the Western Region Superintendent. Fern is an organist, teacher, counselor, ministers to pastors' wives and women in the Western Region, and is an occasional retreat leader. She is a mother and grandmother.

.....unto me.

Lord, my comfort is interrupted with ugliness,
the media won't let the images die —

bloated children—with flies on their faces,
a baby—beyond recognition,
an AIDS victim—alone,
a battered wife—staring hopelessly,
a little girl—afraid to tell,
a senior citizen—abandoned,
a single parent—overcome,
a believer—disillusioned,
one called of God—lost his way,
grieving parents—standing by a grave,
a family in fear—an empty bottle.

Is this emotion I feel
shame?
This collage of images
in my mind screams
don't look!

SO WHY DON'T YOU DO SOMETHING GOD?

I will my child, only through you.
I took the first step — Jesus. You
are the tributary of my love flowing
from that cross. Touch them with the
message of hope before their cries fade
into the night.

Forgive me Lord, comfort blocks my view of the cross.

In as much...

—Fern Smith

Appalachian Regional WHFMS

Margaret Carter-Minton of Ferguson, North Carolina in her devotional presentation used a copy of Leonardo da Vinci's painting of The Last Supper and her experience when in Milan, Italy and shared how the painter leads one's eye to Christ in the painting. She applied this observation to the fact that we as Christians should be leading others to Him.

A prelude was played by Piedmont Conference WHFMS President Angela Johnson and Sharon and Michelle Walker sang "Words" before Director of World Missions Harold Patterson was introduced as the morning speaker. Rev. Patterson presented a challenging message concerning the growth and dedication he had observed during his recent trip to our churches in India and Malaysia.

President Betheleen Facemyer presided over the business session. There were 58 voting delegates representing the four conferences in the region. It was voted that each local WHFMS give as much as possible toward the regional project — a new roof for the Women's Building at Blowing Rock Campground. It was recommended that each local increase their giving to Christmas in October by ten percent annually as stated in the national goal. The budget accepted for 1989 includes a $2.50 monthly contribution per member for United Ministries. With a regional membership of nearly 500 women, this total could reach $15,000, which is significant.

Director of Christian Education Millie Griswold impressively installed the following officers: President Betheleen Facemyer, Vice-president Judy Tidwell, Secretary Pat Jenkins, Treasurer Ruby Brookshire, and auxiliary leaders Elaine Preslar, Carol Chambers, and Betty Curtis.

WHFMS Conference Meeting at Camp Ohio

Judy Stopher of the Mt. Liberty Advent Christian Church was the guest speaker. She used examples of Bible women and challenged the women to learn from their lives. For example, Priscilla dared to use her mind, Elizabeth and Sarah did not doubt God, and Dorcas helped people.

President Betty Bockover inserted devotional thoughts from Psalms at various points of the day and included Psalms 25, 33, and 37. Women from four churches shared highlights of their year: Columbus, Mt. Liberty, Sparta, and Stantontown. The current officers were retained for the coming year: President Betty Bockover, Vice-president Oma Rutan, Secretary Janet Cunningham, and Treasurer Gloria Vermillion.

Northern California Conference Women

The Women's Home and Foreign Mission Society held their annual meeting at Camp Santa Cruz. Former Regional WHFMS President Maxine Lobb of Seattle was their devotional leader and Brad Rigney, new associate pastor at Santa Cruz, the mission day speaker. President Grace Hughes led the business session. Repairs, upkeep, and rental of the mission cottage was discussed. Margie Specht, Helen Williams, and Flora Sullivan are the mission cottage committee for this year. The delegates voted to disburse funds to the Northern California Conference, Oro Bible College, Shijonawate Bible Institute, and to Advent Christian World Missions, a total of $1,150. They voted to plan for a Trained Resource Person workshop for next summer's meeting. Other officers include Vice-president Jill Pratt, Secretary Lillian Willis, and Treasurer Donna Creecy.

WHFMS Sunday Celebrations

Baraboo, Wisconsin

Missionary David Vignali, home on leave for several months from the Philippines, spoke on WHFMS Sunday at his home church. He told of Advent Christian mission work in several areas of the Philippine Islands. Dave will be back at Oro Bible College in Cagayan in November teaching several classes. WHFMS women participated in the morning service: a duet by Margaret Jantz and Marilyn Taylor, and responsive reading and Scripture read by President Vurla Harris. A reception was held after the service giving the congregation an opportunity to visit with David.

Wilmington, North Carolina

Nancy Patterson of Charlotte, North Carolina was the guest speaker at United Advent Christian Church querying, "What in the World are You Doing?" The WHFMS Choir sang the choral introit, the prayer response, and a choral benediction. A ladies trio sang "My House is Full But My Fields are Empty." The United Church has four active WHFMS circles.

Columbus, Ohio

President Lyddia Mahan reports a challenging message was brought by Ohio WHFMS Conference President Betty Bockover. Lyddia led the responsive reading and Janet Burgess offered prayer and provided special music.

Hickory, North Carolina

The Carrie Teague and Fay Messick WHFMS circles planned the Sunday morning service and invited Director of Women's Ministries Caroline Michael to be their guest speaker. She shared with the morning worshipers a number of examples of how to make Jesus truly Lord of one's life. Peggy Huffman presided and Arlene Lail led the choir in a special arrangement of "We've a Story to Tell."

Lake City, Florida

WHFMS Program Chairman Rickie Hickel of First Advent Christian Church invited Ralph Dodge, retired Methodist Bishop who now resides at the Advent Christian Village, to be their guest speaker. A number of you may have read his book, *The Revoluntary Bishop Who saw God at Work in Africa*. WHFMS president is Dee Jarrard.

Ferguson, North Carolina

Director of World Missions Harold Patterson was the guest speaker and he shared his experiences and observations from his visits to our mission fields. A picnic lunch followed the service in the Pavilion. Anita Earp is the WHFMS president.

Arleta, California

Printed inserts for the bulletin made the special responsive reading, "New Life in Christ," available for the congregation. Susan Knowles, Gail Schwark, Dixie White, and Donna Hett dramatized the skit provided in the program kit, "The Holy Spirit and You," which demonstrates the place the Holy Spirit plays as believers witness for Christ.

Smithfield, North Carolina

The cast: Tillie Edwards, Sylvia and Sherry Rackley, Wanda Berrier, Linda Barbour, and Derle Moore effectively presented the skit, "The Holy Spirit and You" directed by Jill Gonzalez. Wanda Berrier shared an exciting testimony about how God had used a man to continually invite her and her husband to church and to make Jesus Lord in their lives. The service concluded with "I'll Tell the World That I'm a Christian."

DID YOU KNOW?

Reasons for unanswered prayer...

•We don't pray. James 4:2, "You do not have, because you do not ask God."

•We pray selfishly. James 4:3, "When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures."

•We pray only for show. Matthew 6:6, "When you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who sees what is done in secret and will reward you."

•We give up too soon. Luke 11:10, "For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened."

•We don't qualify. James 5:16, "Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective."

•We have unconfessed sin. Psalm 66:18, "If I had cherished sin in my heart, the Lord would not have listened."

•We aren't diligent. 1 Thessalonians 5:17, "Pray continually."

•We don't expect to get prayer answered. Matthew 9:29, "According to your faith will it be done to you."

Do not pray for easy lives;
pray to be stronger people!
Do not pray for tasks equal to your powers;
pray for powers equal to your tasks.
Then the doing of your work
shall be no miracle,
but you shall be a miracle.
Every day you shall wonder at yourself,
at the richness of life which has come
to you by the grace of God.

—Phillips Brooks

Mission Prayer Partnership

NOVEMBER

19 *Praise* the Lord for the new outreaches that have started through Advent Christian missions in **Malaysia** work.

20 *Pray* for the hungry of the world that they might be fed and that we might have a large **World Hunger** offering today.

21 *Pray* for traveling mercies for **Alice Brown** as she returns home for a one year furlough. Remember her mother as well.

22 *Pray* for **David Vignali** as he becomes Interim Director at Oro Bible College in Alice's absence.

23 *Pray* for **Margaret Helms** and the Leadership training classes she's giving to the Philippine nationals.

24 *Praise God* from who all blessings flow. Be sure to thank the Lord today for our missionaries who are at home and overseas.

25 *Pray* for **Bruce Arnold** as he teaches in the Philippines.

26 *Pray* for God's blessings upon the **children** of our missionaries. May they feel the love of our Advent Christian people for them.

27 *Pray* for our national missionaries in **Mexico**. May God give them a harvest of people for God's kingdom.

28 *Pray* for national workers in **Nigeria**. May God continue to expand this growing church.

29 *Pray* for your **Regional Superintendent** today that God would give him strength and wisdom for this important ministry.

30 *Pray* for our **home missionaries**. May God encourage them.

DECEMBER

1 *Pray* that the Lord would use this **Christmas season** as a means of reaching many for His son throughout the world.

2 *Pray* for the office of Church Relations of which **Brent Carpenter** is director. Pray for this important ministry of keeping alive the Advent Christian churches.

3 *Pray* for **Francis and Lyne Ssebikindu** and their

demanding ministry in Memphis.

4 *Pray* for the meetings that evangelist, **Cameron Ainsworth** will be conducting.

5 *Pray* for **Thambusamy and Victoria Devairakkam** that God would strengthen and bless their ministry.

6 *Pray* for **Floyd and Musa Powers** that the Lord would continue to touch people for Jesus Christ in their work in Japan.

7 *Pray* for **Austin and Dorothy Warriner** that they might see a good increase in the work in Asukano.

8 *Pray* for **Lucas and Beulah Davasahyam** and their ministry. Pray for a special blessing for Lucas on this his birthday.

9 *Pray* that the Lord would continue to give us **new missionary candidates.** *Pray* too, for those who are studying for missionary service.

10 *Pray* for revival and spiritual renewal throughout the Advent Christian Church.

11 *Pray* for **Frank Jewett** as he ministers today and pray for a special blessing on this his birthday.

12 *Pray* for **Judy Jewett** as she shares with her husband in deputation work.

13 *Pray* for the pastors of our **India conferences,** that God would continue to grant them strength and wisdom as the work grows.

14 *Pray* for **Barbara White** as she teaches the Indian women in Kodaikanal.

15 *Pray* for **Marion Damon** as she directs the School of Evangelism and trains new students for the ministry.

16 *Pray* for **Beryl Joy Hollis** as she works with our mission churches in the Madras area. May God bless her on this her birthday.

17 *Pray* for our **chaplains** as they share the gospel message with the servicemen in their church.

18 *Pray* for our national **radio ministry** that lives might be touched through it.

The Great Exchange **Continued from page 6**

Christ is our life (Colossians 3:3-4). John teaches, "This is how God showed His love among us: He sent His one and only Son into the world that *we might live through Him" (1 John 4:9).*

No wonder Paul says in Philippians 4:13, *"I can do all things through Christ which strengthens me."* Through Him I can please God; through Him I can do His will, bear His fruit, be His light, do everything and anything. On the other hand, I must always remember that apart from Him *I* can do nothing (John 15:5). Thank you, Lord Jesus, for Your life in exchange for mine. □

Advent Christians Forge New Relationships with Evangelicals **From pg. 3**

essentially intellectual despite the long held suspicion of education and learning that exists in a number of our local churches?

Joining NAE doesn't solve those problems. But it does give us the ability to share in some of the key things God is doing in our time in evangelism, missions, and social concern. And it identifies us with those who take seriously the Lordship of Jesus Christ and the inspiration of Holy Scripture.

As an Advent Christian, I'm proud of our association with NAE. I'm pleased we're part of an organization that encourages us to strengthen our doctrinal heritage and at the same time gives us the privilege of practicing our Lord's command to demonstrate our discipleship by our love for our Christian brothers and sisters. May the relationship between the Advent Christian Church and the National Association of Evangelicals be long, healthy, and prosperous. □

5 Things to Forget **Continued from pg. 6**

sins and casts them behind his back (Isaiah 38:17). The prophet Micah says that God will "cast all our sins into the depths of the sea" (Micah 7:19). Someone has suggested that the shores of this sea are lined with signs reading, "No Fishing."

God doesn't pull out our past failures and hold them over our heads. He releases us to move forward in faith. If God forgives and forgets, who are we to nurse the past?

Third, remember that God heals. The Psalmist said, "He restores my soul" (Psalm 23:3). Paul knew something of this healing power and urged his readers to renew their minds by focusing on things that are true, honorable, just, pure, lovely, gracious, excellent, and praiseworthy" (Philippians 4:8).

Some deeply ingrained memories may take time and effort to erase. But prayer and positive mental focus will prevail. Unhealthy memories will flee as you join the Psalmist and meditate on God's Word day and night (Psalm 1:1-6).

Here in Seattle, a metal ship moored in the salt waters of Puget Sound will accumulate globs of barnacles on its hull. Periodically, the skipper will take his craft through the government locks into the fresh waters of Lake Union. The barnacles die and drop off. The lightened ship then returns to the sea for further work.

We need the fresh waters of God's spirit to cleanse our minds each day. By bringing our cluttered, clinging memories to Him, we will find that the old passes away. New thoughts of His grace and goodness lighten our load and we go forward in service for Him. □

Roger Schoenhals is past editor of Light and Life, *and is now a freelance writer living in Seattle, Washington.*

Take Time to Build An Intimate Relationship

Our family spent a day in Washington, D.C. during a recent summer vacation. We arrived at our motel outside the city limits the evening before that eventful day. Not wanting anything to go wrong, I decided to drive toward Arlington Cemetery to scout out the area where I would park the car the next day. No trouble.

After breakfast I moved out into rush-hour traffic, assured that my prearranged plans were flawless. Nearing the destination, I merged into the turning lane only to discover that someone had placed brightly colored wooden barriers in my path. "Where did those things come from? They weren't there last night!" The next thing I knew, the Lincoln Memorial, which had only been an intriguing structure in photographs, stood directly in front of me. I now drove into what the travel club book described as hostile territory for first-time visitors.

Barriers to a strong relationship

Barriers have a way of popping up unexpectedly in many areas of our drive through life. Marriage is no exception. In our quest for the intimate marriage—a relationship where there is a sense of being unconditionally accepted, valued, understood, and appreciated — barriers spring up to deter us. They cool the fires of a warm and glowing relationship.

One such barrier to intimacy is busyness. The pressures and responsibilities of our world can easily snare us into what Howard Hendricks calls "marriage morbidity"—living together without closeness. As we scurry about to accomplish the mundane, we begin to take each other for granted. A marriage will fall apart if the only time the couple sees each other is when they are worn out.

To overcome this barrier you must first evaluate your priorities in life. The "busyness barrier" is usually the result of our pursuit after materialism, prominence, and the selfish desires of the flesh. What are your priorities in life? What is really important to you? How do the choices you make reflect your values?

Monitoring the level of involvement in activities outside the family will help to keep busyness in check. Participating in activities will help to keep busyness in check. Participating in activities with other people is a healthy component of our development as mature individuals. But, over involvement can strip you of precious time and energy that should be directed toward your marriage. I suggest you include plenty of time for activities that bring you and your mate together, rather than fragment your relationship. Developing areas of commonality will result in a growing intimacy.

Jay Kesler, writing in the Spring 1988 issue of *Marriage Partnership*, told how there was not enough time for his work, his marriage, his children, and personal leisure time. The result was that certain activities (such as golf, which takes hours away from home) were impossible at this time in his life. He decided to spend his personal time at home where he is close to his wife and family. Kesler does gardening and yard work with his wife. Woodworking projects are done in his home shop in small snatches of time or alongside his son.

Time together

Planning time together is crucial to developing intimacy. When you are busy, there is a tendency to not take the time to plan ahead. One couple in a marriage seminar said that they mark out time for each other on their calendars. This can be done on a weekly or monthly basis. Another couple reserves the same day or night each week for a planned time together. Some couples wash dishes together as they share their thoughts and life events. Others rise early in the morning to spend private moments together.

The health of your marriage is vitally important. Overcome the barriers to an intimate marriage by taking the time to know each other. Building an intimate relationship is pleasing to the Lord. □

William Batson pastors the Advent Christian Church in Portsmouth, New Hampshire and is founder of "The Family Builders," a teaching ministry dedicated to building stronger marriages and families.

Your Servants for Christ's Cause

International Missionaries

Philippines

Alice Brown (March 24)
P.O. Box 223
9000 Cagayan de Oro
PHILIPPINES

Margaret Helms (September 18)
P.O. Box 263
6000 Cebu City
PHILIPPINES

Frank and Judy Jewett
(December 11 and January 29)
Danny Jewett (June 13, 1976)
Timmy Jewett (June 26, 1978)
Letitia Jewett (April 13, 1980)
34 Main Street
Eliot, ME 03903

David Vignali (May 10)
P.O. Box 223
9000 Cagayan de Oro
PHILIPPINES

Bruce Arnold (June 21)
P.O. Box 263
6000 Cebu City
PHILIPPINES

Japan

Floyd and Musa Powers
(October 8 and February 28)
Rebecca Powers (Nov. 11, 1971)
4-11-18 Motoyama Kitamachi
Higashinada ku, Kobe shi 658
JAPAN

Austin and Dorothy Warriner
(January 1 and January 18)
3-37 Okayama Higashi
5 Chome, Shijonawate Shi
Osaka Fu 575
JAPAN

India

Marion Damon (March 27)
Box 17, Andivilla
Kodaikanal 624101
INDIA

Beryl Joy Hollis (December 16)
American Advent Mission
Velacheri, Madras 600 042
INDIA

Barbara White (January 14)
Box 17, Andivilla
Kodaikanal 624101
INDIA

National Missionaries

Malaysia

Thambusamy and Victoria Devairakkam
3A, Jalan Sayang Housing Trust
86000 Kluang, Johor
WEST MALAYSIA

Lucas and Beulah Devasahayam
30, Jalan Cempaka
Taman Gembira
42700 Banting, Selangor
MALAYSIA

Memphis

Francis and Lyne Ssebikindu
(May 13 and May 8)
Faith Nancy (September 28, 1982)
Ashley Grace (November 21, 1985)
2590 Faxon Avenue
Memphis, TN 38112

Mexico

Abel Garcia-Lara
368 Anita Street, Sp. 62
Chula Vista, CA 92011

Alberto Gomez
Arturo Angulo
Ever Perez
Ezequiel Serrato
c/o Abel Garcia-Lara

Nigeria

E.P. Etuk-Akpan — Secretary
Nigerian Advent Christian Mission
Ediene Ikot Obio Imo Headquarters
c/o Use Ikot Ebio P.A. Offot
Uyo Local Government Area
Akwa Ibom State
NIGERIA

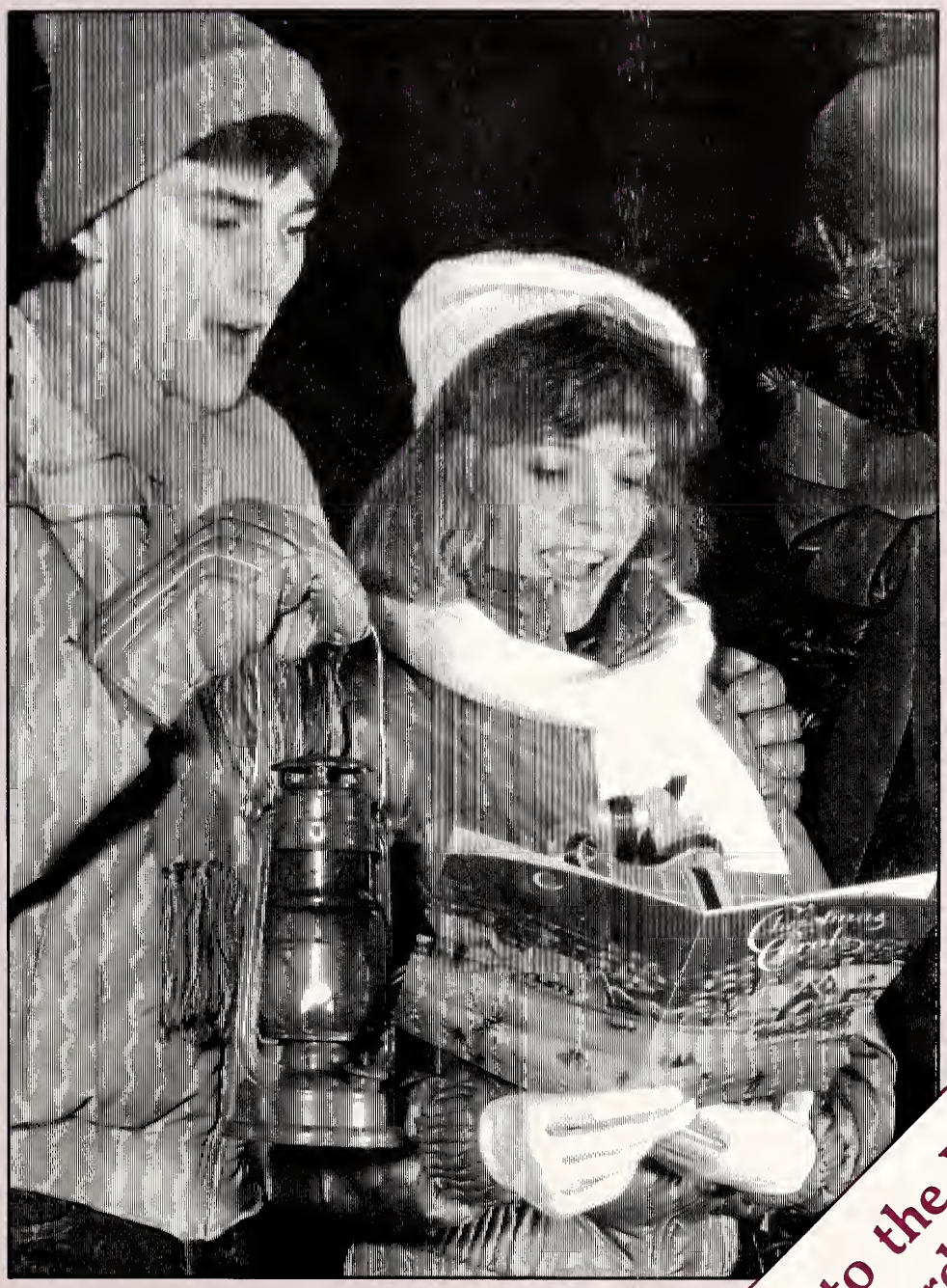
Advent Christian General Conference
P.O. Box 23152
Charlotte, NC 28212

Harold Patterson; World Missions
Millie Griswold; Christian Education
Caroline Michael; Women's Ministries
Robert W. Cole; Finance
Robert Mayer; Publications
David Northup; Executive Vice-president
Brent Carpenter; Church Relations

C286.7
A24

Advent Christian WITNESS

December 1988



Joy to the World, the Lord is Come

FEATURES

Like a Child Roger Schoenhals 4

Christmas points us to the Christ child and reminds us of our Lord's admonition to come to him as little children.

Last Temptation: Blasphemy, Censorship, or Both? Bob Mayer 8

One of the most controversial movies ever released, Martin Scorsese's film about Jesus provoked outrage, anger, and protest among a number of Christian organizations. But were the protests helpful to the cause of Christ?

Why Don't You Get a Normal Job? An Interview with Bruce Arnold 12

Advent Christian missionary Bruce Arnold serves Jesus Christ in the Philippines. In this interview, Bruce speaks about his commitment to missions and his goals for missionary service.

Have You Experienced God's Touch? Clayton Blackstone 14

In the midst of our busy lives, how can we experience God's presence? Clayton Blackstone offers some fresh ideas on how God touches us in our daily lives.

DEPARTMENTS

From the Editor 3

Women's Ministries 18

Prayer Partnership 21

ON THE COVER:

The joy of Christmas focuses on the birth of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Volume 36, Number 11

Advent Christian WITNESS

Editor Robert Mayer

Contributing Editors Caroline Michael, Harold Patterson, William Batson, Clayton Blackstone, David McCarthy

Typesetting Susan Gettis **Proofreading Shirley Brooks**

Art Director Linda Perault

The Advent Christian Witness (ISSN #007-740) is published monthly except for a combined July-August issue by the Advent Christian General Conference of America, 14601 Albemarle Road, P.O. Box 23152, Charlotte, N.C. 28212. Subscription rates in the United States and Canada: One year, $11.00. Single copy: $1.00. Overseas rate: One year, $14.00. Second class postage paid at Charlotte, N.C. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Advent Christian Witness, P.O. Box 23152, Charlotte, N.C. 28212.

As the official publication of the Advent Christian General Conference, the Advent Christian Witness publishes the teachings of the Advent Christian Church and promotes the task of evangelism both in North America and around the world. The views expressed in this magazine are those of the author and may not necessarily reflect those of the editor or the Advent Christian General Conference. Member: Evangelical Press Association. Copyright © 1988 by the Advent Christian General Conference of America, Inc.

FROM THE EDITOR

THE JESUS SEMINAR: FACT OR FICTION

Ever had something strange happen at work? Your editor had one of those moments this morning when he read the following rather bizarre news release:

"Textual critics of the Bible are going public with their wares, partly to counter "all that conservative doctrine" on Christian TV programs. So said one of the members of the *Jesus Seminar* after the group decided in a line-by-line vote in an Atlanta hotel October 14 that the Lord's Prayer was not the words of Jesus but the work of Christians years after the crucifixion.

"One member predicted the vote would be widely welcomed in the biblical scholarship community." That the church will accept it is another question," he said. The group, made up of scholars from Catholic and Protestant (including United Methodist and Southern Baptist) schools, was founded in 1985 to determine what words attributed to Jesus in the Bible were actually his." (*National and International Religion Report*, October 24, 1988).

That a significant number of biblical scholars would seriously consider determining the words of Jesus by majority vote has to rank as one of the strangest events of the 20th century. Why would learned men with PhDs from the finest universities in Europe and the United States ignore strong evidence for the historical reliability of the Scriptures?

Philosophers use the term "presupposition" to describe ideas and beliefs that we assume to be true without question. For example, we assume that the sun will rise in the east every morning. We don't spend great amounts of time trying to prove that statement because first, we don't see the need to and second, it happens every morning. When it comes to life and daily living, all of us assume certain things, like the sunrise, to be true without question.

The problem with the scholars who make up the *Jesus Seminar* is that they read the Bible with the wrong assumptions. Modern secularism (known by some as "secular humanism") makes certain assumptions about life that if true, would destroy the intellectual foundation of the

Continued on page 22

Christmas Greetings

On behalf of the **Advent Christian Witness** staff, your editor has the privilege of wishing you a blessed holiday season. May the joy of our Lord's birth fill your heart, home, and family during this season and throughout the coming year.

In my over six years of service as your editor, two things stand out. First, I've had the privilege to work with Advent Christian writers like Clayton Blackstone, William Batson, David McCarthy, Clyde Hewitt, Bruce Burks and many others. These writers have given of their best time and effort throughout 1988 to the **Advent Christian Witness**. I'm thankful for them.

I'm also thankful for you, our readers. Your support is one of the main reasons we publish this magazine. Our task continues to be to serve you. Thank you for your support and may God richly bless you.

Like a Child

G. Roger Schoenhals

In his red, footed pajamas, Jonathan crawled in among the pile of presents under the Christmas tree. He turned, sat down and looked out through the strands of tinsel. Then he reached up and fingered one of the shiny bulbs.

I watched and wondered. Sitting there among the presents, my seven-month-old son seemed to belong. He was, to us, a gift from God.

My mind traveled back to that first Christmas in Bethlehem and God's gift of His only Son. Jesus came not as a full grown man, but as a child. He lay in a manger, vulnerable and dependent.

It occurred to me that God's gift included not *only* His Son, but also an example for us to follow in our relationship with Him. Jesus said, "Whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it" (Luke 18:17).

Christmas, then, can be a time not only to rejoice in the birth of the Christ Child, it can be a special season to study the little ones about us. Through them we can freshly discover the characteristics our Father desires to see in us.

Here are seven qualities of childlikeness I have observed in the early years of my four children. I pass these along as "starter blocks" to get you going in your own adventure of observing children at Christmas.

Dependent: A child is unable to care for himself. He must rely on adults for protection, provision, and instruction. Mom or

dad must wash him, dress him, and care for his hurts. He is vulnerable, powerless. He may even need help opening his present.

We please God when we come to Him in the spirit of dependence, looking to Him for His fatherly care.

Transparent: We can see right through a child. If he is happy, it shows. If anger is there, we see it. Whatever is going on in that little head, the face tells the story.

We adults tend to hide our feelings. We hide behind our masks. But children are wonderfully unpretentious. They are uncomplicated, obvious.

God delights in our honesty. He wants us to be open with ourselves, with one another, and with Him. Children, at Christmas, can remind us to be more transparent.

Innocent: A child is unwise in the ways of the world. He is unsophisticated, gullible, and naive. He has not experienced the range and frequency of deceitful deeds. Though he is a sinner by birth, he is yet innocent in many ways.

God wants us to be as children in this sordid world. We are to blush in the face of immorality, and run from the presence of evil. We are to be "blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a

Are You Ready for Christmas?

J. Ronald Schoolcraft, Sr.

At Thanksgiving time someone asked me, "Are you ready for Christmas?" I threw the question right back at her, "Should I be?" Then she explained that if one must purchase a number of gifts it should be done early, before, as she said, "they are picked over."

Each year it seems that we become aware of Christmas a bit earlier than the year before. Our local stores had their gala decorations up before Thanksgiving this year, and it might not surprise me that in future years Labor Day might mark the start of what a friend calls "the yearly mad rush!"

I am amazed at the time, energy and money that is poured into this one day, and yet the real meaning of the day is obscured by it all. If I am to enjoy Christmas I must spend hours and hours shopping, decorate my home with a Christmas tree, have my wife prepare piles of "goodies" that will cause me to gain at least five pounds, attend a number of functions, both religious and otherwise, send Christmas cards and fight the congestion at the post office, not to mention the street and shopping center traffic, and one more thing, watch the same Christmas specials on TV that I have watched the last three years. With all of this it is no wonder the average man slumps into his easy chair for a "long winter nap" after the traditional dinner!

We must not let this birthday of our Lord Jesus Christ become a burden, and take the attitude expressed by a friend of mine, "I'll be glad when it's over!"

The other day someone read to me a poem entitled "Slow Me Down, Lord." That's a good suggestion for Christmas. We somehow must slow down enough to remember the full meaning of Christmas. Gaiety and happiness should rise from a heart filled with thanks to God for sending Jesus into the world to love us, and wash us from our sins in his own precious blood. The giving of gifts can be explained to our children as being suggestive of the one great gift God gave to the world in the person of Jesus Christ.

Speaking of preparation, there is coming another great event for which we need to prepare, and it would be great if we would get as excited about it, and spend as much time in getting ready as we do for Christmas. I speak, of course, of the second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ to this earth to raise all the sleeping dead, judge the world, destroy the wicked and reward the righteous with life eternal in the everlasting Kingdom of our God. Jesus did not tell us the day or hour of his return; however, he did teach us that it is near enough to prepare for it. It cannot be very long. It is definite. Jesus promised it, angels promised it, prophets of old proclaimed it, the apostles taught it and it behooves every one of us to prepare for it. □

crooked and perverse generation" (Phil. 2:15).

Wide-eyed: Sometimes it's more fascinating to watch the face of a child looking at a sunset, than to see the sky itself; or to study a child as he watches the lights blink on the tree. Children have that marvelous capacity to gape and gasp. They "oooo" and "ahhhh" with ease.

Too often we adults take God and His world for granted. We reveal the loss of simple astonishment, the absence of amazement. We pray to the God of the universe as if He were an old college friend. We look at the star spattered sky and yawn.

God wants us to say, "WOW!"

Teachable: A child is like a sponge. He soaks up whatever his adult leaders say and do. He is impressionable, moldable, and pliable. He has not reached the point of knowing more than mom or dad. He seeks answers with annoying frequency: "Why this? Why that? Why? Why? Why?"

God is not put off by our questions. Rather, He desires to teach us and to guide us. He tells us: ask, seek, knock.

Eager: Young children are eager beavers. They are ready to go with us anywhere, anytime. They want to be where the action is. They are eager to please and enthusiastic. They can't wait until Christmas morning to open the presents.

God likes that kind of responsiveness. He wants us to stand on our tiptoes, zealous to learn His will, eager to do it.

Trusting: Children display simple faith. They readily accept whatever mom or dad says. They leap into space, knowing the outstretched arms will save them. Without wavering, without wondering, they believe. They accept our stories about Santa Claus coming down the chimney—or the truth about Jesus in the manger.

The Bible calls us to "trust in the Lord with all your heart" (Proverbs 3:5). Repeatedly we are exhorted to exercise our faith; to believe. Children can teach us how.

Christmas is coming and children will be in the midst of it all. Through some of their words and ways we can perceive what God wants of us. And, in turn, we can offer to our Father the gift of a childlike heart. We can affirm our dependence on God, our transparency before Him, our innocence in the world, our wide-eyed wonder at His glory, our openness to His guidance, our eagerness to serve Him, and our simple faith in His Word. □

Only One Bethlehem

Only one Bethlehem would hold a cradle
Only one stable give its welcome
To the baby Son of God.

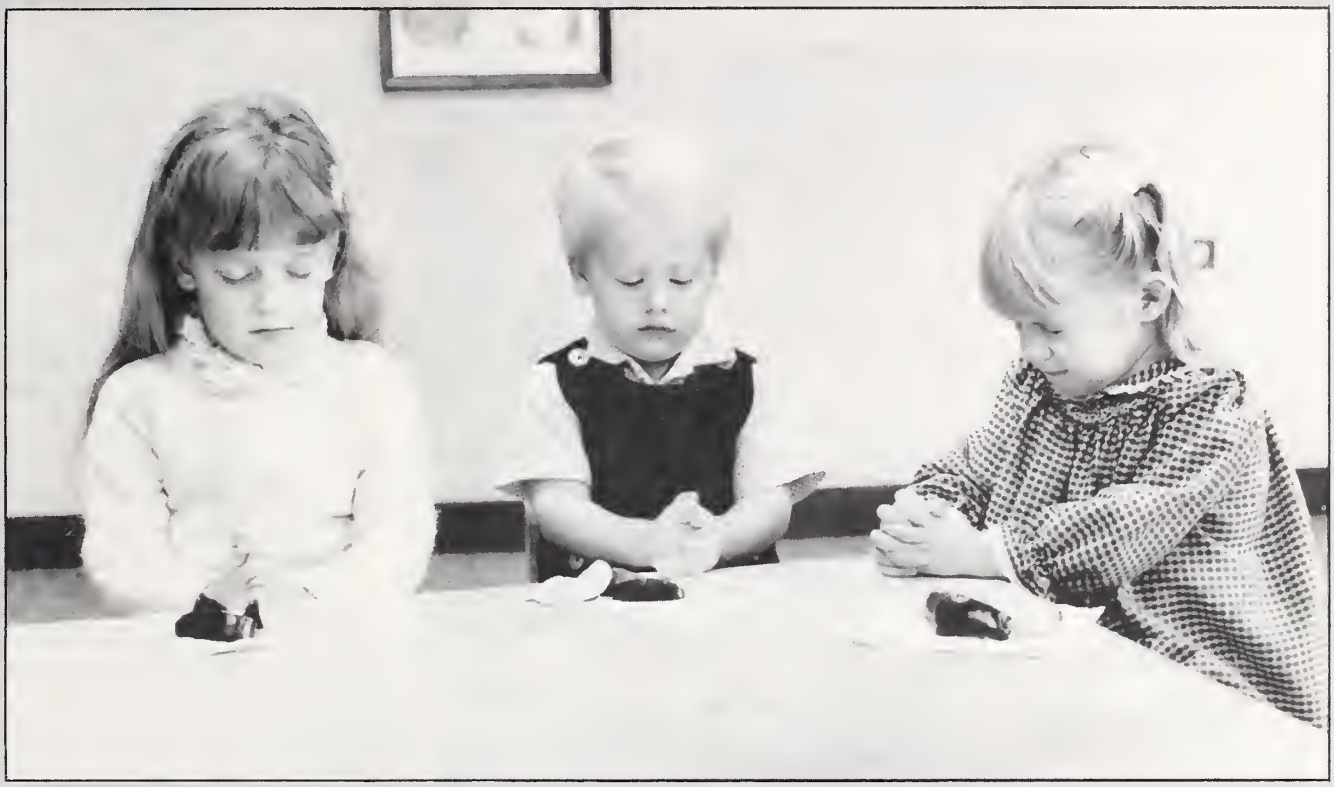
But now there is no house in all the world,
Ours or yours, the home of anyone, --
But has the privilege
Of welcoming the King
Who comes to offer fellowship,
A friendliness to shed upon our days
The joy and glory of His Kingdom,
His perfect peace.

Let's open wide our doors
That He might enter in,
Our Guest, but more than that;
He comes to be our Host and Lord.

—James Asa Johnson

G. Roger Schoenhals is a freelance writer living in Seattle, Washington.

Biblical values have always been taught here.



Every Sunday, week in, week out, teachers rely on *Bible-in-Life* Sunday school materials to help them clearly show their students the difference between right and wrong, between respecting the rights of others and living entirely for oneself, between honoring God's laws and ignoring them. *Bible-in-Life* literature helps teachers stress those timeless, changeless values that help build a God-fearing nation, and will help build the character of young people for generations to come.

Bible-in-Life materials can help you teach the Biblical value of faith . . . the value of honesty . . . the value of obedience . . . thankfulness . . . purity . . . love . . . . Life Curriculum can help you tell the value of knowing that Jesus Christ is the Lord of life. There is no more important value. To those of you who share the same mission and have chosen Advent Christian materials to help you accomplish it, we say thank you. To others, we invite you to join us in our quest. Send for your free *Bible-in-Life* samples today!

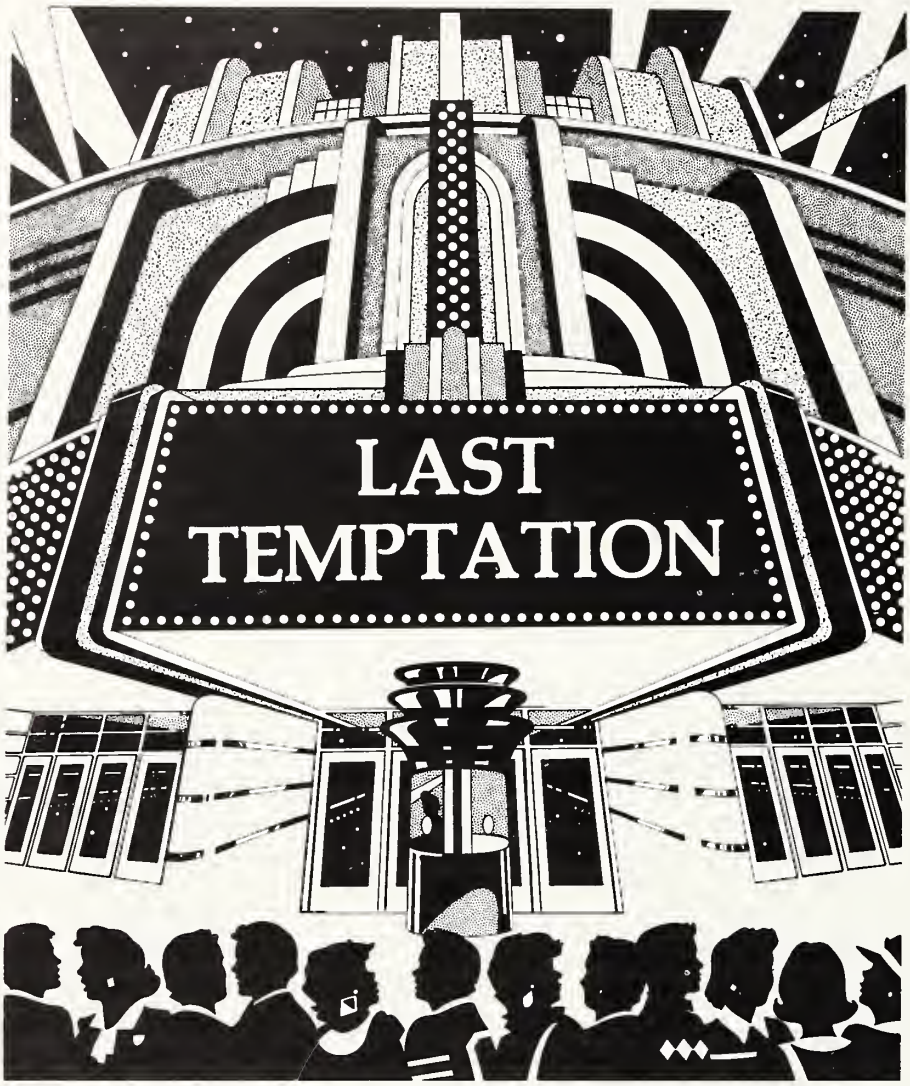
Bible-in-Life *Sunday school materials are produced by the David C. Cook Publishing Co. who have helped teach Biblical values for over 110 years.*

Free Sunday School Curriculum Samples. Check any or all departments below.

☐ Nursery ☐ Kindergarten ☐ Primary (1-2) ☐ Primary-Junior (3-4)
☐ Junior (5-6) ☐ Junior High ☐ Senior High ☐ Adult

Name _____ Position _____
Church _____
☐ Church
☐ Home Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
☐ Church
☐ Home Phone No. _____ / _____

Send to: Dept. of Christian Education, P.O. Box 23152, Charlotte, NC 28212



Blasphemy... Censorship... or Both?

Bob Mayer

August 15, 1988. The Republican National Convention opens in New Orleans. And who's on the cover of *Time* magazine? George Bush? Ronald Reagan? Jack Kemp? Guess again.

The cover focuses the magazine's 20 million readers attention not on the newest political superstar or scandal, but on perhaps the most controversial figure in human history: Jesus Christ. Why, in the midst of the 1988 presidential campaign, would the nations most read news magazine feature two articles about Jesus Christ? The answer? The new Hollywood film by Martin Scorsese, *The Last Temptation of Christ*.

The movie, based on the novel of the same title by Nikos Kazantzakis (author of *Zorba the Greek*), was filmed in Morocco, according to *Time*, "on a pinchpenny budget of 6.5 million." And while Christians have always been suspicious of the movie industry, never has one film raised such massive protests from churches, religious organizations, and individual believers.

Protest efforts focus on restricting showing

Leading protest efforts was the American Family Association (AFA), headed by Rev. Donald

Wildmon. An ordained United Methodist minister from Mississippi, Rev. Wildmon founded AFA several years ago to alert Christians to the impact of television on the moral and ethical values of American culture. While retaining that purpose, AFA, through their monthly newsletter, has touched on a variety of other issues including pornography, homosexuality, abortion, defense spending, and humanistic influence in public education.

AFA had three goals in relation to the Scorsese film: Alert others to what they felt was the film's blasphemous treatment of Jesus Christ. Force Universal Studios to stop distribution of the film. Organize peaceful protest efforts by Christians to encourage local theatres not to accept the film if Universal proceeded with distribution.

According to AFA literature, "The film follows years of practice by the major studios of Hollywood of depicting Christians in negative stereotypes in movies and television productions. Universal would never, ever release a film so offensive to blacks, Jews, or even homosexuals. But they have no reservations about releasing a film so offensive to the overwhelming majority of Christians." Rev. Wildmon called the *Last Temptation*, "the most perverted, distorted account of the historical and biblical Jesus I have ever read."

Before the film's completion and release, AFA and other evangelical Christian organizations had apparently been promised a screening of the film three months prior to release. Universal Studios decided, for reasons still unknown, to renege on that agreement and move release of the *Last Temptation* ahead six weeks from October to August.

Protest efforts included peaceful demonstrations at theatres across the country with some notable events picked up by the network news. Screens were slashed in a Utah theatre. Campus Crusade founder and president Bill Bright offered Universal 10 million dollars to purchase and destroy all copies of the film. Noted Los Angeles fundamentalist minister R.L. Hymers, no stranger to theological and political controversy, injected anti-semitism into the protests with a bizarre demonstration outside the home of Universal Studios president Lew Wasserman. Hymers depicted Wasserman, a Jew, as participating in the killing of Christ because of his role in the

Christian opinion about film divided

Critical opinion about the controversial film, *The Last Temptation of Christ* ranged from high praise to utter contempt. And while the majority of conservative Christians found the film crude and possibly blasphemous, some evangelicals gave Martin Scorsese, the film's director, high marks for an honest effort to come to grips with the human/divine nature of Jesus. Reviewers Erick Norlin and Troy Wittrin, in the October 1988 issue of *World Christian*, write:

"Last Temptation is a cinemato-graphic masterpiece, with elaborate yet realistic costuming and sets. It conveys a stunning feel for life in first century Palestine, giving an accurate picture of the culture in which Christ lived.

"However, the movie has little mass appeal outside of the surrounding controversy. It is slow moving and the acting is often less than mediocre.

"The movie challenges Christians to consider the point at which temptation becomes sin and to think about what the 100 percent humanness of Jesus really means, a question mostly avoided by the church today." □

film.

Advent Christian responses to protest efforts

Advent Christian responses to *The Last Temptation* were varied. The Appalachian Advent Christian Association passed a resolution at its August annual meeting encouraging its people and churches to not see the film and ask theatres in their communities not to show it. The North Scituate, Rhode Island Advent Christian congregation used a bulletin insert from AFA and encouraged their people to ask local theatres not to show the film. Pastor Ed Whitford wrote, "The management will not know how you feel if you fail to call. You can count in this battle for the minds and souls of our community, by sharing your personal concern...Remember to be nice!"

Pastor Norman Phillips, from First Advent Christian Church in Live Oak, Florida wrote in his church newsletter, "...the release of this film has already shaken many Christians out of their apathy. Now the film cannot be credited for good and I agree with Bill Bright to buy it and burn it at the stake. But be sure of this that God will turn this degraded act of rebellion against the antichrist and triumph over him, because God never loses."

The leadership of United Advent Christian Church in Wilmington, North Carolina commended theatre managers who chose not to show the film and said, "We will not be involved as leaders in any public demonstrations that bring attention and publicity to the film, but we do reserve the right to speak unfavorably toward the film without having seen it. We believe that adequate data can be secured, and that it is possible to make a wise decision without seeing the movie."

Issues raised by protest efforts

The film has run its course and protests have all but stopped. Now it's time for evaluation. What effects did all this effort have on the Church of Jesus Christ?

Some church leaders assert that the protest efforts backfired because they drew attention to a film that would have gone unnoticed by most Americans. George Keck, editor of the *Evangelical Beacon* put it this way, "Christian protests have resulted in publicity that almost no amount of money could have purchased. And the results has been just what Universal was hoping for. The film, which could have been a box office dud and died quietly, has flourished."

Some of the protests, most notably the Hymers' episode, tried to ascribe anti-Christian motives to the makers of the film. In a prepared statement, the National Association of Evangelicals rejected those claims: "We ascribe no such [anti-Christian] motive. Others have seized on the movie as a vehicle for pursuing an anti-semitic agenda. That is grossly unjust. Universal Pictures has the right to make and distribute *The Last Temptation of Christ*. And those who believe in Christ have the right to boycott the film."

Perhaps the most fundamental questions raised by protest efforts involved Christian attitudes toward the nature of American culture and our role in that culture. Charles Colson, Carl Henry, and other well-known evangelical thinkers assert that Christians must wake up to the reality that we now live in a pagan society where Christian values and principles no longer form the foundation of ethics and morality. If that's true, and there is good evidence to believe it is, then Christians have to ask some tough questions about tactics and strategy when it comes to films such as the *Last Temptation of Christ*.

Some of those questions: How do we communicate the true nature of Jesus Christ to men and women in our non-Christian culture? Do protest efforts, such as those surrounding the Scorsese film, do as much damage to the cause of Christ as the film itself? Can we still pretend we live in a Christian society?

In his letter to the church at Philippi, Paul writes that he rejoices even when others talk about Jesus Christ out of selfish motives or ambition. The name of Jesus was daily mocked in Roman theatres and on Roman streets. Yet Paul knew that God could use even blasphemous words as an opportunity to get people thinking about who Jesus really is. If anything, *The Last Temptation of Christ* has people at all levels of our society talking about Jesus. Will our words and deeds lead them to discover the Jesus of the New Testament? □

'The Last Temptation' and Christian Protests

I think we've shot ourselves in the foot! We've been conned, flim-flammed, played for suckers, manipulated, ripped off, taken to the cleaners—and any other cliches you might want to employ.

Picture this scene in a plush Universal Studios conference room:

"Look, I know the film is very controversial, but it's a low budget job. It's slow-paced and too long. It'll probably get rotten reviews, if any, and die at the box office. How're we gonna get 'em to buy tickets?"

"Well, why not hire this Christian publicist, Penland, and let him try and stir up some action?"

"Okay, but we can't let him see the film or he probably won't take the job."

"Look, just hire him and promise to let him review the film, but don't really show it to him. If he quits, it'll make some news. Then we can contact some of these radio preachers and church leaders and promise them a preview."

"Yeah, then we'll back out, saying it's not ready. This will make them suspicious and angry. The more we can stir 'em up, the better. We've done it before, we can do it again!"

"Hey, here's another idea. We schedule release for September, see. Then we surprise them and release it a month ahead of time. It'll still be summer when people have more time to go to the movies.

"This oughta really rile 'em up. Those fundamentalist crazies will be picketing, phoning, writing, ranting and raving. Just think of the free advertising we'll get. Hey, we'll pick up millions in free publicity. It's a natural; we can't miss. The box office will go nuts!"

Well, this scenario is imaginary, but it could contain more truth than fiction regarding the discussion at Universal Studios about release of the film "The Last Temptation of Jesus." It certainly seems so, judging from the way things have worked out.

Protest

The blasphemous, non-biblical distortion of the life of Christ has been front-page news for days. One evening, Ted Koppel devoted his entire "Nightline" program to the film as he interviewed Don Wildmon of the American Family Association and Martin Scorcese, the film's director.

Countless editorials, articles and TV news reports have appeared. Christian protests have resulted in publicity that almost no amount of money could have purchased.

And the result has been just what Universal was hoping for. The film, which could have been a box office dud and died quietly, has flourished. Opening in just nine cities, it grossed the most per theatre of any film for that weekend, taking in $44,579 per screen, for a total of $401,211.

One reviewer I heard on public radio said the most exciting thing about seeing the movie, which he panned as being "dull," was coming outside afterwards and facing the crowd of protesters.

"Two hours and 40 minutes of boredom," said one TV reviewer. "Aesthetically graceless and philosophically turgid," said a Hollywood critic. Meanwhile, Universal has been taking out full-page ads. Yesterday (Aug. 17) they had a two-page spread in *USA Today*, featuring favorable comments on the film. Some were quite impressive, but none were by anyone who was identified as a Christian.

How do we respond?

As Christians, we struggle with how to respond effectively to anti-Christian forces and events.

Men and organizations such as Dr. James Dobson (Focus on the Family) and Rev. Donald Wildmon (American Family Association) perform a vitally important service in keeping Christians informed.

However, we may need to be much more intelligent in our responses. Our Lord said, "Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves" (Matt. 10:16). We need to exercise (and seek) wisdom (James 1:5, 4:3).

We certainly need more prayer. We need to think through causes and effects before we act. Picketing and protests have their place, but must be used wisely. The same applies to letter writing. Scorching epistles which brand people as "tools of Satan" are mostly "written off" as being from the religious lunatic fringe.

Paul told Timothy that "evil men and seducers" would become "worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived" (2 Tim. 3:13). This is certainly true today. What is our best defense? As always, it is an offense, but not the kind you might imagine.

The Lord instructed: "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven" (Matt. 5:16). Further excellent instruction comes from Romans 12:21—"Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good."

When all is said, what is the finest defense of the Christian faith? It is people living out the love of Christ. It is the orphanages, hospitals, rescue missions, famine relief efforts and self-sacrificing concern for others demonstrated by millions of believers.

Our best direct action against evil is prayer. Then we need good works, not for salvation, but to demonstrate the reality of our new life in Christ.

This kind of living will overcome evil, convert sinners, silence scoffers and glorify our Father in heaven. It will also make the production and distribution of Christ-dishonoring films such as "The Last Temptation" far more difficult and far less profitable. □

George Keck is editor of the Evangelical Beacon, *the denominational magazine of the Evangelical Free Church. Used by permission.*

An interview with Bruce Arnold

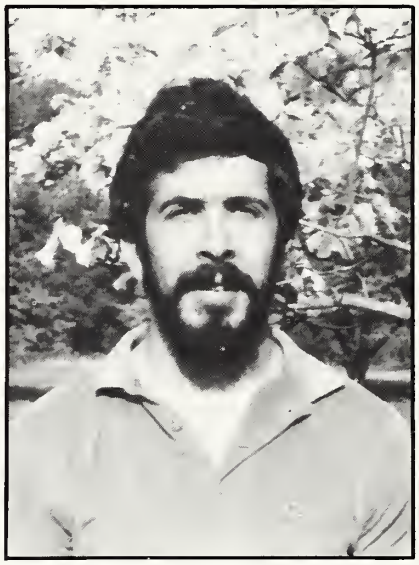
WHY DON'T YOU GET A NORMAL JOB?

Bruce Arnold, newest Advent Christian missionary in the Philippines, began his ministry in that country last June. Just before he left, the *Advent Christian Witness* asked Bruce about his interest in missions and his goals for ministry in the Philippines.

Bruce, you're heading for the Philippines for a two-year short term assignment. What motivated your interest in missions?

My first interest in missions came from hearing a man speak about missionary aviation. From that time I pursued the aviation aspect of missions. It was something that caught my interest, something that I really thought I wanted to do. I pursued that when I graduated from high school, but the doors began to close. The Lord helped me see that aviation was not the way He was leading.

So, from that time I was still interested in the mission field and felt that the Lord had definitely called me to missions. I applied at Berkshire Christian College and studied there for four years.



Bruce Arnold

From there, I've seen the Lord leading me toward missions more and more each year.

You've had some previous short-term experience with, "Youth With a Mission." Where did you serve with them and what were some of your responsibilities?

The school I attended through YWAM was their Discipleship Training School. It was held in Lausanne, Switzerland and ran for six months. There were three months of classroom training, in which we studied the character of God, intercessory prayer, spiritual warfare, relationships, self-esteem, and other areas related to discipleship. From the three-month school, we traveled for a three-month outreach to Italy, Greece, Turkey, and Yugoslavia. While out on outreach we did one-on-one evangelism, tract distribution, drama team, and music. Later on in the summer, when we returned from outreach, I was able to travel to France and England to do some more outreach with a friend of mine from this school.

From your perspective, why would someone like yourself leave home for two or more years to work in a land 10,000 miles away?

Many people have asked me, "Why don't you stay at home and get a normal job like everybody else? Why don't you stay and paint like you have been doing?" I respond that I've been called in the mission field, and the Lord has put that calling on my life. I feel that the Lord commands us to go to preach the gospel in all lands. That would

be my number one reason for going, because I feel that's what the Lord has called me to and that is what He demands. Also since I am able to do it, since I am single and don't have too many commitments here I feel that the Lord is able to use me in missions.

What responsibilities will you have in your Philippine assignment?

My primary task is working with English-speaking Bible studies in the Cebu area. Also I'll be open to starting new Bible studies, and so on.

While Frank Jewett was there, he was able to start a number of English Bible studies, so I'll be working with some of those and working with the churches and the pastors in Cebu. Also I'll seek to minister in English around the area as much as possible, doing some evangelism and outreach. The field council and the superintendent will have other tasks that they will need me to do so I will be available for whatever they need.

What do you sense God has been teaching you during these last several months as you prepare to leave?

The biggest thing that I can think of, that the Lord is teaching me, is to trust Him no matter what. Before I left, my pastor talked to me about trusting God because I felt some doubts as to what the Lord was doing in my life. He encouraged me and told me to trust in the Lord, because He knows what is best for me. As I have been here in Charlotte for these past few weeks, I think that is the thing that has come across for me — trusting in the Lord and being completely open to what He leads.

As Advent Christians pray for your work, what are some specific things that you would like them to remember?

I have a burden that the Lord has put on my heart to reach out to people who are physically in need. I'd like to be able to minister to some of them so I would ask that your readers pray that the Lord would give me a vision of how to touch their lives for Jesus Christ. Also I would like to learn some of the language while I am there, so pray that the Lord would give me knowledge and patience in that area.

One more area for prayer is that as I work with the pastors in the Philippines, that I can be an encouragement to them, and a prayer partner with them. □

Dedication service for the newest Advent Christian missionary, Bruce Arnold. From left to right: Norman Curtis, Pastor Ed Whitford, Bruce Arnold, Gerald Stevens, and Don McCall. The service was held at the North Scituate, Rhode Island Advent Christian Church.

Have you experienced GOD'S TOUCH?

Clayton Blackstone

Watching Hazel walk to the mailbox often brought smiles to my face during our first year together. Bounding beside her, the dog she got when she took me for better or worse. Raja

was a St. Bernard who craved attention. My young bride weighed less than the dog and did not relish such slobbery affection. She flailed a stick to keep the animal at a respectable distance.

We and the dog share something in common...hugs help now and then. Truth is, any relationship which progresses very far includes the element of touch. A baby denied the touch of loving people dies. A marriage void of touch grows cold and distant. Children denied touch become withdrawn or aggressive to secure attention of some kind.

Sometimes a touch stops the flow of tears. A good friend commented following the death of her husband. "What I miss most is the absence of someone to hug me for no special reason."

A gentle touch provides correction. A pat on the back says "You did a good job." A firm and extended handshake communicates compassion and empathy.

How does God touch us?

A replay of past experiences testifies to the value of touch. And hence, the sadness as we reflect on our relationship with God. We have never experienced a physical hug from him. He doesn't pat us on the back. We do not know what it is to feel the physical touch of Jesus which brought healing to the broken bodies and wounded spirits He ministered to.

Yet He does touch us. Not in the way we would like, perhaps, for that is a part of the "not yet" dimension of our relationship. The effect is always the same: changed lives. The evidence of such a touch is sometimes dramatic, at other times only slight, but always apparent to the discerning eye. Spiritually transformed by these encounters with the living and glorified Christ, our hands now become instruments through which God touches others.

While we know what a hug feels like, we must admit that we are not so sure what the touch of God feels like. Since the feelings differ with each of us, perhaps it might be best to investigate an encounter the Apostle John had with the glorified Christ and learn what we can about preparing for such a touch. While feelings will always differ, the result remains constant.

"I, John, your brother and companion in the suffering and kingdom and patient endurance that are ours in Jesus, was on the isle of Patmos because of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus. On the Lord's Day, I was in the Spirit and I heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet, which said: 'Write on a scroll what you see and send it to the seven churches in Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia and Laodicea.' "

—Revelation 1:9-11

According to tradition, John writes these words as an old

man. He found himself banished to a barren island because of his aggressive preaching of the Gospel. Here he encounters a dramatic revelation of the glorified Christ. Think back over your own life. I think you'll find the following observation true: *We are most apt to become aware of the living Christ during times of high stress.*

Experiencing God's touch in times of adversity

John writes as one who paid the price for faithfulness. His admonitions to stand firm were tested in the furnace of his own suffering. He understood hardship. He was prevented from spending time with friends and family. He must have been tempted to compromise his position in order to enjoy the last years of his life.

Frankly, there are times when I cry out for the absence of times that try my soul. Just the other day, I asked Hazel what I could do to rid myself of the stress I felt. I expected a suggestion like, "Well, you could leave the ministry." Instead she deadpanned, "You could always die!"

I do some of my best work under pressure. And in the privacy of my own closet. I recall that I turn to God most often during those times. We discover sufficient grace during times when we are hard pressed but not crushed.

John could have capitulated to the pressure, but he didn't. The enemy frequently slips into our lives with suggestions like: "Give up." "There's no hope." "Why bother." "God doesn't hear your prayers." "Who do you think you are? God doesn't care about you." When we're alone these blue feelings wreck havoc with our minds. Could they be true? No!...Maybe...Yes?... "God, where are you?"

John refused to allow circumstances to sour his relationship with God. There's some debate as to exactly what "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day" means. I am most comfortable with understanding it this way: John was in the proper frame of mind when the time for worship came. This time, however, something different happened. God gave him a vision of the glorified Christ.

Attitudes are so important when it comes to worship. The experience sometimes mirrors the desert terrain because of the attitudes we permit to take up residence in our spirits.

You cannot harbor bitterness towards God or someone else and catch a vision of the glorified

Preparing For the Touch of God

•Make Sunday the center of your week instead of the week-end. We live for the week-end these days, but for the wrong reasons. Spend time each week reflecting on what Jesus said to you through His Spirit during worship. Ask your pastor what his sermon text and worship theme are for the coming Sunday.

•When you encounter periods of high stress, plan a mini-retreat. Get away to a quiet place for a day. Spend some time in reflection. Read the Scriptures. Write about what a vision of the glorified Christ would mean to you at this point in your life. When the time of quiet merges with the stress you are encountering, you are most open to experiencing the touch of God.

•Listen to music which draws your focus to the glorified Christ. Music touches us deeply. Its impact often alters the way we perceive life. Well written music can carry us into the presence of God.

•Read the biography of a spiritual giant and observe the experiences which shaped their relationship with God. During the past two weeks I have read about George Mueller whose example of faith stirred my heart. He practiced total dependency on God. His perception of Christ enabled him to trust Him without qualification. I also read of Robert Sheffey, an itinerant preacher in Virginia. His compassion for people was shaped by his vision of the Savior. Both affirmed that every generation needs people who have an exalted view of Christ.

•Someone who is a part of your life needs your touch. Offer yourself to God and extend that hug, pat on the back or handshake in his name.

—Clayton Blackstone

Christ. Come expecting just another service and that's what you'll get. Anticipate boredom and you'll not be disappointed. "Catch the spirit" and you'll be carried into the presence of the King of Kings.

John experienced what he did because he was internally prepared for it. He made some choices which proved to be worth the cost.

"I turned to see the voice that was speaking to me. And when I turned I saw seven golden lampstands, and among the lampstands was someone 'like the son of man,' dressed in a robe reaching down to his feet and with a golden sash around his chest. His head and hair were white like wool, as white as snow, and his eyes were like blazing fire. His feet were like brass glowing in a furnace, and his voice was like the sound of rushing waters. In his right hand he held seven stars, and out of his mouth came a sharp double-edged sword. His face was like the sun shining in all its brilliance. When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead."

—Revelation 1:12-17 (NIV)

A vision of the living Christ overpowers us

The imagery of John's description suggests One unlike we have ever known. The aged apostle grapples for adjectives to describe what he has seen. We close our eyes to imagine, yet we still fail to grasp the magnitude of the One who caught John's eye.

People with national or international reputations leave me in awe. I've never been around many, but when I am I forget everything I planned to say to them if the opportunity ever came. I stumble over words. Sentences come out garbled. Nothing makes sense.

The vision John beholds dwarfs the aura surrounding the dignitaries of our world. Having beheld the sight before on the Mount of Transfiguration, John still fails to recognize the Lord Jesus. The glimpse caught him off guard. He enjoyed a special relationship with Jesus while he was on earth, but his friendship failed to lessen the impact of the encounter.

We need to be driven to our knees by his overpowering nature. The best of plans will gather dust on the shelf...the finest of intentions will remain unfulfilled...Our dreams will remain locked in our minds until Jesus bursts into our inertia with a revelation of his majesty. When he does, our lives will explode with fresh meaning.

I fear that we suffer a brand of Christianity too natural...too worldly...too predictable. I'm not suggesting that each of us needs to see what John saw if we are to have a meaningful spiritual life. Such encounters are rare. And Jesus determines when and where. But our faith borders on the predictable. We tackle what we feel we can accomplish on our own. Jesus is a shadowy figure to us, more like a distant relative than a special friend.

Few of us live overwhelmed with Jesus. As a result our acts of service languish in the mire of commonness.

We need a vision of the glorified Lord if we are to accomplish anything supernatural. We need to be driven to our knees by his overpowering nature. The best of plans will gather dust on the shelf...the finest of intentions will remain unfulfilled... Our dreams will remain locked in our minds until Jesus bursts into our inertia with a revelation of his majesty. When he does, our lives will explode with fresh meaning.

"Then he placed his right hand on me and said: 'Do not be afraid. I am the First and the Last. I am the Living One; I was dead and behold I am alive for ever and ever! And I hold the keys of death and Hades.

"Write, therefore, what you have seen, what is now and what will take place later. The mystery of the seven stars that you saw in the right hand and of the seven golden lampstands is this: The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches and the seven lampstands are the seven churches."

—Revelation 1:17-20

The vision so overpowers John that he collapses. Jesus reaches out to touch him. That touch restores his confidence.

James Denney writes, "There have always been men in the world so clever that God could make no use of them; they could never do His work, because they were so lost in admiration of their own. But God's work never depended on them, and it does not depend on

them now. It depends on those who, when they see Jesus Christ, become unconscious, once and forever, of all that they used to call their own wisdom and their strength...The supreme law of the Kingdom is still the glory of God, and not the glory of the clever men."

In light of the majestic vision, how could John write? Perfection only accents our own imperfection. The One who was dead lives. The Absolute Sovereign of the universe admonishes him to "Fear no longer."

Once in a while one of our children will wake in the night frightened by a horrifying dream. Sometimes they scream out. At other times they sob or complain of not being able to go back to sleep. During those times, one of us will lie beside them and speak words of assurance. Soon the sobs are replaced by the rhythmic breathing of a child sound asleep. The words of one whom they trust melts their fear.

The greater our vision of the glorified Christ the more his touch will mean.

The touch of the Lord's hand on John's shoulder not only restored his confidence, it commissioned him to ministry.

Throughout the Scriptures the laying on of the right hand is an act of commissioning. It signifies power and blessing. Jesus never touches us to destroy us although his touch may burn for a time as it burns away the impurities of our lives.

Tim Stafford writes "His hands are pure fire. Their touch must burn with the painful fire of pure love, a fierce and purifying love. In contact with such love, we can imagine our impurities exploding into smoke and flame until, when the fire died for lack of fuel, what is left glows like molten gold to match the glow of the one who touches us."

Ministry becomes increasingly possible for us as we sense the commissioning touch of God on our lives. Once seared with hot coals from the altar, our singed lips must respond "I will do it!" as the call to service echoes throughout his kingdom.

Several months ago I decided to send a letter and an article by Dave Roper titled *No Little Places* to some friends back East. I hadn't heard from many of them for years, but it seemed to be something the Lord was asking me to do. A few days later, I received the following response: "Please accept my heartfelt thanks for your letter of last week. You will never know how helpful it was, especially the day it arrived. I have been experiencing many of the things described in *No Little Places* and was greatly encouraged after reading it."

Dave passed his touch to me. I passed the touch to my friend in New England. And he passed his touch on to one of his friends, while praying the article would encourage him as well.

We are the body of Christ in our world. Jesus touched others and brought them to wholeness. He has assigned that role to us.

We have studied the text. We understand John's experience. We confess our personal desire to see Jesus in his glorified state. We have entertained possible options to prepare ourselves for His touch. There remains now only one other matter. What will I do with what I know?

In a new release by Harper & Row, Soviet premier Mikhail Gorbachev comments on the difficulty of instituting change.

"Perestroika is a revolution. It has proved to be more difficult than we first imagined, and we have had to reassess many things. Revolution requires the demolition of all that is obsolete, stagnant, and hinders fast progress. Without demolition you cannot clear the site for new construction...Of course, demolition provokes conflicts and sometimes fierce clashes between the old and the new. There are no bombs exploding or bullets flying, but those who are in the way resist. And inaction, indifference, laziness, irresponsibility, and mismanagement are also resistance."

The Enemy marshalls our enemies against us as we attempt to revolutionize our lives with the help of the Spirit of the risen Lord. Don't despair! Through Christ we possess the strength we need for the conflict. □

A graduate of Berkshire Christian College, Clayton Blackstone is pastor of the Advent Christian Church of New Hope in Lewiston, Idaho.

Caroline Michael
Director

A Career With Challenge

Glenda Carpenter

Women, are you interested in Christian service? Would you like to have a real impact for Christ on those with whom you work? Would you like an opportunity to develop a variety of gifts and talents? No experience is needed. You can train while you work. The rewards are great! What is this exciting and rewarding career? Motherhood! No, not the motherhood you see on television or in the media, the kind that is sandwiched in as an attachment to your *real* career, but full-time, full-energy motherhood!

Now, I realize for some of you this is not an alternative. Because of divorce, death, or the sickness of your spouse, some of you are forced to work outside the home. My heart goes out to you. I know it must be difficult for you to manage. But, with all the negative pressure our society places on the full-time homemaker, we need to speak up for the most meaningful lifestyle available, that of wife and mother.

We whose husbands are employed do have a choice. Many women would enjoy being homemakers, but because of the financial strain on the home, feel compelled toward secular work. Perhaps our families have overextended themselves and tend to live above their means. Have we exchanged the treasures money

can't buy for material possessions?

If we would consider the added expense of working outside the home such as child care, clothing, lunches out, convenience foods, vehicle maintenance, insurance and so on, we might find that we could live as cheaply on one income. My husband is a pastor and we have three sons. We own a modest home and pay our own bills. We don't have the finest of things, but we have plenty. God has blessed us and provided for us in abundant ways. I have never worked outside the home to "make ends meet."

There is little doubt that our children are gifts from God. When God wanted to bless women in biblical times, he gave them children. The implication of the liberation philosophy of our day is that children are often an inconvenience. They somehow interfere with a woman's right to be all she can be. Abortion on demand propagates this message. If a woman becomes impregnated at an inappropriate time, she is free to do away with the child as she would throw away an old shoe. This is certainly not God's concept.

Can strangers replace a mother's love?

We often see the career women in the magazine with their beautiful clothes, every hair in place and briefcase in hand, headed off for another day at the office. What we don't see is the little tot who has been taken from his snug little bed at an early hour in the morning, only to be dropped off at a child care center or a baby sitter's home for the day. Do we honestly think strangers can replace a mother's love and care for her child?

Have we been sold a bill of goods? Many babies know six weeks of security, while Mom is on maternity leave, before being thrust into a totally different environment. We have yet to see the resulting problems arising from a generation of children reared in day-care centers. So many mothers speak today of "quality" time. If we were truly honest, after a hard day at work, preparing a meal, cleaning up and getting things ready for the next day, there is very little time

left, be it quality or not. Our children suffer from a lack of parental attention as we pursue that all-important pay check.

It may surprise you, but I feel that even after our children enter school, we are needed as full-time mothers. Our children begin to spend the majority of the day away from us; therefore, the hours before and after school and on the weekend become extremely important. If we have had the day to care for the maintenance of the family, then we will have more time to meet their emotional needs when they are at home. When our children catch all those colds, the flu, and stuffy noses, they need special care, comfort, and warmth. Can we help but be appalled at the number of children who are carted off to school with illnesses because Mom can't miss another day of work?

Even teenagers benefit greatly from a house-Mom. Yes, they can do many things for themselves, but the adolescent years are extremely stressful. To whom will our children go for genuine love and support after battling the insecurities of the day if we are at work? All too often, teenagers when left to their own devices will fall into the harmful habits that we can help them resist.

Teaching by example

One of our greatest tasks as Christian mothers is to teach our children about God. Living our lives before them in Christ is the greatest teaching method available. Our children will usually become what we are. Just what is the role-model the day care center presents? Even the best of these centers can hardly substitute for the love and care of a Christian home. I would rather effect the lives of my children in this way than achieve any success the world has to offer. Certainly, this would sound selfish to the world. But then, the world was never meant to understand anyway. By being a homemaker I am free to serve others and God to a greater degree. I have time to be a prayer warrior and study God's word in-depth. I'm free to visit the sick and the lonely, and to cultivate friendships with young and old alike.

Our children grow up so quickly. Will you be able to say without equivocation when your last child leaves home that you have given the best that was in you? Or will you have the feeling that somehow you have failed the people you love the most? Think about it, Mom! □

Glenda is the wife of Rev. Brent Carpenter, who was pastoring the Clovis, New Mexico Advent Christian Church when she wrote this article. (She acknowledges Brent's editorial assistance.) They moved to Charlotte, North Carolina several months ago with their three sons, Scott, Chad, and Brian as Brent became the Director of Church Relations. Glenda enjoys sewing for her family and friends, teaching Sunday school, and jogging five miles a day.

Treasure of a Mother's Heart

My baby smiled for the first time today.
It wasn't my eyes he was gazing into at that magic moment.
His coos turned into a word as he mimicked the sound he heard.
It wasn't my ears that heard that very first word.
Through cheering and coaxing his wobbly little knees carried
  him those first few steps,
Only to tumble into someone else's arms.
I wasn't there to kiss his "boo boos"
Or praise his little castle in the sand.
I wasn't there to answer the million questions that flooded his mind.
At ten, he and his best friend had a fight.
He needed Mom to tell him everything was going to be alright.
But I wasn't there.
The day he found his little dog had died, and he cried and cried.
I should have been there to hold him tight,
But I wasn't there.
How many countless times has he needed me?
Times I don't know anything about.
A hug, a smile, a word of praise, or just a listening ear.
They were mine to give, but I wasn't there.
I listened to the call of the world and sought fulfillment
  in a career outside of my home and my family.
I look back sadly, for I can never recapture those lost
  memories; those things that make up
  the treasures of a mother's heart.

—Glenda Carpenter

Fall Retreats

Alton Bay, New Hampshire

The theme for the Eastern Region WHFMS retreat was inspired by Mark 6:31 where Jesus entreated, "Come unto me by yourselves to a quiet place and get some rest." Challenging workshops addressed the topics of the lure of cults, dealing with frustrations in our homes, help for the pastor's wife, and parsonage children. During the two-day retreat, the women had a free afternoon to shop, create, or rest before the evening candlelight banquet. The Care/Share groups where small groups met to share Scriptures and encourage one another were especially meaningful.

Chicago, Illinois

Sixty-five women attended the second annual women's retreat sponsored and planned by the women of Hope Community Church. They held their day-and-a-half event at a Howard Johnson hotel. Dr. Lillie White was their guest speaker for the three general sessions with the theme "Holding Forth the Word of Life." Workshop topics included dealing with marital conflict, singleness, intercessory prayer, enriching devotional time, witnessing in the work place, and reaching unsaved family members. One of their goals was to minister to every woman. They invite all women from neighboring Prairie States churches to join them for their retreats.

LaGrange, Illinois

All Prairie States women were invited to a one-day smorgasboard of events hosted at the LaGrange Church. National Vice-president Dorothy Randolph coordinated plans with Director of Women's Ministries Caroline Michael. Representatives from five conference churches appreciated the insights and experiences shared by former short-term missionary Ann Lay of Aurora, serendipity moments, and the luncheon prepared by LaGrange ladies. Singspiration-worship times were led by Nancy Johnson and Betty Darrus. Caroline presented an audio-visual about African women in crisis, "What Can One Woman Do?" Berniece Porter, Dotty Randolph, and Phyllis DuBois participated in a panel discussion of values of retreats and conference ministries. A committee will plan an event for 1989.

Camp Maranatha, Idyllwild, California

Elizabeth Knechtel, former Dean of Women at Aurora University and member of the San Diego church, was well received as the guest speaker for the annual Southern California WHFMS retreat. Dorothy Gransee also of San Diego was the devotional leader and Loretta Shelton of Tustin directed the music-worship segments. About 45 women appreciated the development of the theme, "Who Am I?" A verse of Scripture was left with each place setting for all meals.

Tesheras Report

George and Beverly Teshera presented an interesting and challenging report of their summer trip to visit our mission work in the Philippines and showed slides for the fall meeting of the Western Washington WHFMS held in Nooksack. Fran Matheson's devotional thoughts on "Rivers" were based on Scriptures from Ecclesiastes, Psalms, Isaiah, John, and Revelation. President Nancy Winslow directed the business session with 37 women representing five churches and these officers were elected: President Kaye Forbes, Vice-president Maxine Lobb, Secretary Sarah McDowell, and Treasurer Luella Johnson.

Pocahontas Women

Diana Able, wife of the pastor at Elbert, shared devotional thoughts from Micah 1:1-5 and introduced the guest speaker Norm Arrington, a biblical dramatist. Twenty-eight women representing five conference churches met at Elbert for their fall rally and President Alma Harvey gave a report on the Appalachian Regional WHFMS meeting at Blowing Rock. Pastor Doug Able closed the meeting with prayer before they enjoyed fellowship over lunch.

Central Region Newsletter

While the Central Region WHFMS board were discussing communication problems, they decided to have a newsletter inserted in the *Advent Christian News* each quarter for the coming year. They will plan to have their triennial regional meeting in Columbus, Ohio next August with an all-day retreat at that time. Board members including Carole Lewis, Barbara Ashley, Phyllis DuBois, Ruby Ross, Lois Dotson, and Lorene Neal met at the Advent Christian Church in Villisca. Other topics discussed were changes in report forms, the Joshua Project, and Children's Ministries.

Aurora News

The Women's Fellowship recently held a brunch inviting all church women to view the new video of

Japanese Advent Christian Churches prepared by Dixon McDowell. An afternoon women's study group is focusing on Chuck Swindoll's book, "Living Above the Level of Mediocrity" and an evening group will meet every other week to discuss Jill Briscoe's "By Hook or By Crook." Year-long plans and much effort and energy culminated in the "Homespun Holidays" bazaar in early November.

TRP Workshop

"A new group offers opportunities to bring new people into the church and to faith in Christ as well as providing personal and spiritual growth for the more established Christian," were some of the thoughts expressed by TRP Ernestine Eaton while conducting a TRP workshop at the Chelsea, Maine church. Discussion included general and personal reasons for starting new groups, how to get a new group started, and how a Bible study group may help your church. The women of the Maranatha WHFMS with President Dawne McGrath will be considering these challenges.

Area Mission Conference

Missionary Frank Jewett, on leave from the Philippines, was featured at the mission conference sponsored by the Connecticut and Western Massachusetts WHFMS at Westfield, Massachusetts in September. Churches represented included: Vernon, Torrington, Windsor, Plainville, Bristol, and Westfield. Frank gave a report on the ministries in Cebu, Philippines, showed slides, and answered questions from the congregation. Special music was provided by Becky Leach, Anna Newton, and Jon Taber. Anne Robinson, Marion Drake, and Ann Ball had arranged for an enjoyable fellowship supper.

WHFMS Sunday Celebrations

Smoaks, South Carolina

The Berea WHFMS dramatized "The Holy Spirit and You" for the evening service on WHFMS Sunday. Several ladies had also participated in the morning service by providing special music, ushering, giving the announcements and the welcome.

Mendota, Illinois

Leatrice Brauhn, Myrtle Collings, Phyllis DuBois, Ellen Haight, Lorena Lucas, and Diana Rod presented the skit, "The Holy Spirit and You" during the morning worship service. They provided the special responsive reading, "New Life in Christ" as a bulletin insert.

Mission Prayer Partnership

DECEMBER

19 **Pray** for Advent Christian mission work in Nigeria and for Reverend **E.P. EtukApan,** the new director of the Nigerian work.

20 **Pray** for **Alice Brown** that God would bless her as she enjoys fellowship with her family this Christmas season.

21 **Pray** for **Bruce Arnold** as he teaches at Oro Bible College.

22 **Pray** for **Margaret Helms** and the heavy responsibility that she carries in the work of superintendent of the Philippine work.

23 **Pray** for **David Vignali** as he works for the mission and teaches at OBC.

24 **Pray** for **Oro Bible College** and its students.

25 **Praise** the Lord for the, "unspeakable gift" of His son **Jesus Christ,** our Saviour and Lord.

26 **Praise** the Lord for the decisions for Christ in the **Mexican** work. **Pray** for the **pastors** as they encourage the new believers.

27 **Praise** the Lord for record breaking support for **Advent Christian Missions** this year.

28 **Pray** that God would provide the hundreds of thousands of dollars needed for **new buildings** on our mission fields.

29 **Pray** for our urban **churches** as they seek to reach out to their communities.

30 **Praise** the Lord for our youth leaders who encourage and challenge our **young people.**

31 **Praise** the Lord for **Millie Griswold** and her dedicated work as Director of Christian Education and Youth Work. Pray for a special blessing on this her birthday.

JANUARY

1 **Praise** the Lord for the gift of a new year.

Prayer Partnership

Pray also for **Austin Warriner** on this his birthday.

2 **Pray** that God would grant the greatest year ever for Advent Christian Missions in **decisions** and **baptisms** for Christ.

3 **Pray** that the Lord would give us many more **mission candidates** in 1989.

4 **Pray** for **Floyd** and **Musa Powers** as they labor to encourage our churches in Japan.

5 **Pray** for three couples for **career missionaries** for Japan.

6 **Praise** the Lord for **Bob Mayer,** Director of Publications, that God may bless him and his staff in their work in keeping us up-to-date on what is happening throughout the Advent Christian Church.

7 **Pray** for **Thambusamy** and **Victoria Devairakkam** and their family as they all seek to be used of the Lord in expanding the ministry in Kluang.

8 **Pray** for **Lucas** and Beulah Devasahayam and their family as God uses them in spreading the gospel in the Banting area of Malaysia.

9 **Pray** for Advent Christian **pastors** in the United States and Canada that God would give them a rich harvest of souls this year.

10 **Pray** for **Marion Damon** and the heavy responsibility that she carries as director of the School of Evangelism in India.

11 **Pray** for **Barbara White** as she ministers in Kodaikanal.

12 **Pray** for **Beryl Joy Hollis** and the pastors that she works with in the greater Madras area.

13 **Pray** for **Francis** and **Lynne Ssebikindu** and their growing work in Memphis.

14 **Pray** for wisdom as our mission looks to **new fields** to open.

15 **Pray** for our **national pastors** overseas that God would strengthen and encourage them.

16 **Pray** for our **servicemen** that God might watch over them, protect them and minister to them this day.

17 **Pray** for those who are seeking God's will in providing training for **future pastors** and **missionaries.**

18 **Pray** for **Dorothy Warriner,** that God would especially bless her on this her birthday.

Jesus Seminar: Fact or Fiction **Cont. from pg. 3**

Christian faith. For example, the *Jesus Seminar* scholars probably believe:

- That supernatural events are impossible because every event must have a rational explanation. Therefore, supernatural events like Christ's miracles and even the resurrection could not have happened.
- That because every event must have a rational explanation, human history is not open to intervention from any outside source, especially from God. Therefore the New Testament accounts of miracles cannot possibly be true but must have some other explanation.

So these scholars would have us look not to the Jesus of the New Testament, but to the Jesus of Martin Scorsese (as presented in his film, *The Last Temptation of Christ):* a good man who mistakenly believed himself to be the Messiah. And if we accept that portrait of Jesus, then the Christian faith is nothing more than an illusion and Christmas nothing more than an excuse to prop up the retail industry.

In commenting on the truth of Scripture, evangelical scholar Kenneth Kantzer writes, "The real Jesus, the only Jesus for whom we have any evidence whatsoever, believed the Bible was true and that it was the very word of God. He commanded his disciples to believe it and obey it. He rebuked those who disregarded it or sought to interpret away its obvious instructions." (*Christianity Today*, October 7, 1988)

I choose this Christmas to believe in the Jesus of the New Testament. As an evangelical, I believe in the supernatural and in the historical reliability of Holy Scripture. Moreover, like Martin Luther, John Calvin, William Miller, C.S. Lewis and a host of other learned believers, both past and present, I think the intellectual arguments for the Christian faith far outweigh the shallow skepticism behind such fraudulent and, yes, blasphemous projects like the *Jesus Seminar.* □

God's Resurrection Gift **Cont. from pg. 23**

faithful ones — not a present day possession of mankind.

Now dear reader, please don't say, "David is gone to be with the Lord," or that "he is more alive than ever." Tell them that David is asleep waiting the trumpet call from heaven.

* * * * * * * *

The last trumpet has sounded. Time has ended, we are now in eternity. Jesus has left His mediatorial throne at the right hand of God. *The throne of grace is now vacant.*

"For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first" (1 Thess. 4:16). □

David Osborne served as an Advent Christian missionary in Japan from 1954 to 1971. He wrote these words just before his death in August.

God's Resurrection Gift

David Osborne, Sr.

After several serious heart attacks and a final one pending at any moment, I felt the urge to give testimony of God's grace and goodness to me and then for the hope He has promised His children. The Lord has given me many glorious and happy years. He has blessed me with all Scriptural blessing (Eph. 1:3). My life has been full and rich and now my time has come to lie down and rest in sleep until Jesus comes.

Oh! How I long to see Him, not in the form of something which theologians call a soul, but as Job said, "Yes in my flesh I shall see God" (Job 19:26). I remember what Jesus said in John 5:28,29 "the hour is coming in which *all* that are in their graves shall hear His voice and *shall come forth*" (not come down from somewhere), but come forth in resurrection of life. They that have done good unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation.

I have underlined the word "*all*". All will be there, all will see Him. "Behold, He cometh with clouds and every eye shall see Him, and they also which pierced Him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of Him. Even so, Amen" (Revelation 1:7).

Jesus gave us another beautiful picture of His coming in Matthew 24:29,30, "Immediately after the tribulation of those days (Jesus was looking forward to these very days in which we now live, days of violence and tribulation) shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the power of the heavens shall be shaken, and then shall appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven: and then all the tribes of the earth mourn and they shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory."

Paul adds in 1 Thessalonians, that at that time Jesus will gather His own to meet Him in the air.

How exciting! Not a secret exodus to a theologian's heaven. Not a mysterious disappearance of thousands of people, but a sunless day — a moonless night and chaos in heaven as the stars fall. Not a secret so-called rapture, but a catastrophe so great that all the tribes of earth shall mourn.

Paul adds to this final drama of earth's history. "For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever. Therefore encourage each other with these words" (1 Thess. 4:16-18). How wonderful the dead in Christ are so carefully cared for even to proceed the living saints.

Now take courage as we listen to these precious words of our blessed Lord Jesus. His word is profound and compassionate and unmistakably sure.

"Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in me. In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am" (John 14:1-3).

How compassionate; how precious

There is more — Oh so much more — listen as Jesus teaches in Matthew 25:31. "When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his throne in heavenly glory. All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. He will put the sheep on his right and the goats on his left. Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world."

Just visualize Jesus sitting on the throne of His glory — see his outreached hand of welcome — see the love and the compassion as only He can give, saying, "Come — inherit the kingdom." These are the most precious words in all human vocabulary. By His grace and promise I await this invitation when He's coming. I pray that everyone present is ready to hear Him also say to you, "Come — inherit the Kingdom." What a fearful comparison are the goats on the left.

This is life restored. Life made new. All that are in their graves shall come forth to resurrected life. "Death has been swallowed up in victory" (1 Cor. 15:54).

There is no victory in death. The victory is in the resurrection. At death we do not go to be with the Lord as theologians so often say. It is remarkable that the wisest man that ever lived, King Solomon, said, as he considered man in death, "For the living know that they will die, but the dead know nothing," (Eccl. 9:5). He continues in verse 10, "...for in the grave, where you are going, there is neither working nor planning nor knowledge nor wisdom." All the cares and problems of life are now gone forever as God's child rests from his labors.

But wait! Here comes Paul shouting life and hope down the pages of Scripture. "Behold, I shew you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible shall have put on incorruption and this mortal *must* put on immortality — ...then death is swallowed up in victory. Note the phrase, "must put on immortality." Immortality is God's gift in the resurrection to His

Continued on page 22

Your Servants for Christ's Cause

International Missionaries

Philippines

Alice Brown (March 24)
P.O. Box 223
9000 Cagayan de Oro
PHILIPPINES

Margaret Helms (September 18)
P.O. Box 263
6000 Cebu City
PHILIPPINES

Frank and Judy Jewett
(December 11 and January 29)
Danny Jewett (June 13, 1976)
Timmy Jewett (June 26, 1978)
Letitia Jewett (April 13, 1980)
34 Main Street
Eliot, ME 03903

David Vignali (May 10)
P.O. Box 223
9000 Cagayan de Oro
PHILIPPINES

Bruce Arnold (June 21)
P.O. Box 263
6000 Cebu City
PHILIPPINES

Japan

Floyd and Musa Powers
(October 8 and February 28)
Rebecca Powers (Nov. 11, 1971)
4-11-18 Motoyama Kitamachi
Higashinada ku, Kobe shi 658
JAPAN

Austin and Dorothy Warriner
(January 1 and January 18)
3-37 Okayama Higashi
5 Chome, Shijonawate Shi
Osaka Fu 575
JAPAN

India

Marion Damon (March 27)
Box 17, Andivilla
Kodaikanal 624101
INDIA

Beryl Joy Hollis (December 16)
American Advent Mission
Velacheri, Madras 600 042
INDIA

Barbara White (January 14)
Box 17, Andivilla
Kodaikanal 624101
INDIA

National Missionaries

Malaysia

Thambusamy and
Victoria Devairakkam
15, Jalan Hang Tuah 2/2
Taman Muhibbah
86000 Kluang, Johor
WEST MALAYSIA

Lucas and Beulah Devasahayam
30, Jalan Cempaka
Taman Gembira
42700 Banting, Selangor
MALAYSIA

Memphis

Francis and Lyne Ssebikindu
(May 13 and May 8)
Faith Nancy (September 28, 1982)
Ashley Grace (November 21, 1985)
2590 Faxon Avenue
Memphis, TN 38112

Mexico

Abel Garcia-Lara
368 Anita Street, Sp. 62
Chula Vista, CA 92011

Alberto Gomez
Arturo Angulo
Ever Perez
Ezequiel Serrato
c/o Abel Garcia-Lara

Nigeria

E.P. Etuk-Akpan — Secretary
Nigerian Advent Christian Mission
Ediene Ikot Obio Imo Headquarters
c/o Use Ikot Ebio P.A. Offot
Uyo Local Government Area
Akwa Ibom State
NIGERIA

Advent Christian General Conference
P.O. Box 23152
Charlotte, NC 28212

Harold Patterson; World Missions
Millie Griswold; Christian Education
Caroline Michael; Women's Ministries
Robert W. Cole; Finance
Robert Mayer; Publications
David Northup; Executive Vice-president
Brent Carpenter; Church Relations

AC04343
University of North Carolina
Serials Dept Davis Library
080 A
Chapel Hill, NC 27514

HECKMAN
BINDERY INC.
JUN 92
N. MANCHESTER,
INDIANA 46962